MODERN SCOTTISH POETS

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MODERN SCOTTISH POETS

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IN MEMORIAM.

"The good abides. Man dies. Die too
The toil, the fever, and the fret;
But the great thought—the upward view,
The good work done—these fall not yet."

THERE it will be our duty to record the death of several gifted poetic spirits who have left us since we sketched their careers in this work. The warm references made in the pages of magazines, the columns of newspapers, and from the pulpit afford evidence that they will be greatly missed by a wide circle of friends who will hold their memory green for many a year to come. We keenly feel the loss of the warm sympathy and hearty co-operation of not a few who are now no more. The grave holds their honoured dust, but the genius and the practised skill, the piety and constancy of faith, the learning and kindly humour, the unselfishness, and fearless advocacy of the truth—these, which distinguished them in life, and spoke in their writings, have embalmed their memory, so that of many among those we were privileged to be the means of bringing to the light it may be said that they being dead, yet speak.

As we write we have before us in imagination the pale face and the glowing eye of the youth speaking very intelligibly of a wasting of the sap of life. The pathos that surrounds incompleted lives has been recognised from of old—"Whom the gods love die young." They were doubtless influenced by that hope which is natural to youth as buds are to spring. They

"Died while the first consciousness of manhood
To maiden thought electrified the soul—
Faint beatings in the calyx of the rose."

Had they lived they might have produced a full-length picture; but they died in the flower of their youth, or when just entering

into manhood, and have left us only a few unfinished but very promising sketches. It may be the case that a highly developed intellectual nature weighs down and oppresses the muscular system, while it unduly excites the action of the nerve fibre[8] and the brain. A youth of ardent poetical temperament, full of glowing dreams and bright aspirations, with a passionate all-absorbing love for Nature, an imagination which can realise in a measure the noblest ideal of beauty, and an understanding with capacities for the highest form of truth—such a nature seems most readily to fall mortally wounded in the conflict. We have sketched the career of several so gifted. They have our affection and admiration, and it is pleasant to know that, in the case of most of them, they saw their path, and had courage, faith, and hope to guide them while they walked in it.

All feel that there is something extremely touching and pathetic in the death of the young, and yet does not everything in Nature seem to conspire to prepare humanity for exit in advanced age? Poets have in all periods of the world's history found figures and emblems in Nature to illustrate that in old age man has reached the time for a change. The aged man is spoken of as a "shock of corn fully ripe"—called away in the "sere and yellow leaf." "The last evening," "the gloamin' hour," found him waiting the great change, when his life's work was ended. He left calmly, with the hushed stillness of peace itself, and after the mellow, genial radiance of a bright sunset, which had gilded the dark clouds in the background, and which went

> "Not down behind the darkened west, nor hid
> Obscured among the tempests of the sky,
> But melted into the light of heaven."

Others, as we shall find, have "gone away" in the vigour of their manhood, and the height of their usefulness. In their case, many have felt that a friend was lost to them on earth whose place could never be filled. We will speak of the man of middle age, who laboured with every nerve strung to the utmost, and with imagination all on fire—the cold drops beaded on his pallid face till the work was done, and the problem was solved. How many true poets, varied in their aims and successes, bear to us—for enchantment and delight, for

warning in temptation, and for consolation in sorrow and defeat—the story of their own trials and their own joys! What the world showed to them of gaiety and of guilt, of flattering hopes and cold embittering scorn, of what their own better nature taught them of the path purer than common-place ambition, they recorded in such strains as will not willingly be suffered to pass into oblivion.

We have also the man of wide culture and learning, who bitterly wrote as follows:—"At present I am in good health, for me, and would be only too glad to get the chance of earning something with my pen, as teaching is so scarce and so poorly paid in Edinburgh when it is to be had. . . . I have had a dreadfully hard time of it ever since I came here, and for some years before, and fortune appears more threatful than ever. Several times I have proposed to start for the north and try readings from my own writings as a sort of desperate venture, but some shabby piece of teaching, just one remove from starvation, has prevented me. At this moment my only teaching engagement costs me fifteen hours' time per week, and brings me scarcely ten shillings! A certain editor promises to take some Scotch tales from me by-and-bye, but 'the coo dees wytin' the green girse.'" How often do we see it to be the case that some men achieve a ready reputation, while others of no less merit perform work after work, and the world agrees to pass them by. Literary adventures are like adventures by sea, their success is determined by no forecast. Two vessels quit the same harbour well found—one reaches her port as with the wings of a bird, the other after a hard struggle founders at last.

On the tombs of such as have felt the world to be "a stey brae," we would lay our humble offering of sympathetic and affectionate remembrance, knowing how much there was in them that might have risen to loftier growth had not the summons come to bear them hence. We should never forget the words in the appeal of Jeannie Deans:—"It is not when we sleep soft and wake merrily ourselves that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our own wrongs, and fighting our own battles. But when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body

—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—then it is no' what we hae dune for oorsel's, but what we hae dune for ithers, that we think on maist pleasantly."

"For he who blesses most is blest;
And God and man shall own his worth,
Who toils to leave as his bequest,
An added beauty to the earth.

And soon or late to all that sow,
The time of harvest shall be given,
The flower shall bloom, the fruit shall grow,
If not on earth, at last in heaven."

Before opening our death-roll, we might, not inappropriately, refer to the recent decease of Mr Kennedy, the Scottish vocalist, and in doing so the strange fact may be noted that many of the singers of Scotland have unwittingly taken their last farewell in America. Wilson, who founded the popular entertainments of which our national songs were the distinctive feature, died at Montreal; Wyndham Clarke is said to have died in California; Jeannie Watson in Canada; and the announcement in October of the present year that David Kennedy had died at Stratford, Ontario, was heard with regret wherever Scottish song finds an echo. In June last Mr and Mrs Kennedy and their four daughters began what turned out to be their last tour in America. Three weeks before his death Mr Kennedy was attacked with dysentery, and notwithstanding all the efforts of his medical adviser, it was evident that he was slowly drifting towards the "land o' the leal." During his last moments he spoke to the sorrowing ones around him with solicitude and tenderness, and bade each an affectionate farewell. Then, asking them to unite in the hymn "Rock of Ages," he attempted to take part in the singing as well as his feeble strength would permit, but, ere it was done, his spirit was winging its way to join the choir above. By his removal a great blank will be made in the musical world, for he occupied a unique position as an exponent of our country's songs. But Mr Kennedy was not merely a singer of rare power. He also displayed, in the explanatory narrative with which he prefaced his songs, genuine humour and real dramatic insight. For the old Jacobite songs he had a profound regard, and his "Nicht wi' the Jacobites" was

one to be remembered. He touched all hearts by his pathetic singing of "The Land o' the Leal," while he infused into the martial strains of "Scots wha hae" such passionate expression as never failed to rouse the highest pitch of enthusiasm. His rendering of "Hame cam' oor guid-man at e'en," "The women are a' gaen wud," and "The wee, wee German Lairdie" roused in his hearers laughter and mirth as he showed the humorous side of Scottish life, or drew forth the "saut tear" as he exemplified its pathos. Indeed he carried with him such an amount of national fervour, and so much personal magnetism that his removal will be felt with a degree of keenness such as might be caused by the loss of a personal friend. It has been said of him that "the secret of his success lay in the sympathy that existed between himself and his hearers; and while he may be said to have popularised Scottish song, he did far more in giving voice to the sentiments not only of the Scottish 'makkirs' but of the Scottish people." Kennedy's great merit was that he aimed at the true interpretation of both composer and poet. He was successful in keeping the musical taste of his countrymen from wandering from national standards when there was a danger of their doing so, and his death, as we have said, has left a blank which none now before the public can fill. In the words of Mr King, Aberdeen,—several of whose productions will appear in our next volume—

> *Reft is the silver cord, the sweet lyre mute,*
> *Of him who sung with true Orphean lute.*
> *Hushed is that voice on earth; for ever still,*
> *That tongue which made the hearts of Scotchmen thrill!*
>
> *Auld Scotia mourns her dead, but not alone,*
> *For Scotchmen drop a tear in every distant zone,*
> *Where sympathetic hearts give back the throb,*
> *Awakened now by Scotia's mournful sob.*

Mr William Henderson, London, one of our "Modern Scottish Poets," writing in the *Scotsman*, says:—"Scotland may well be proud of her songs and ballads. Wedded to lovely melodies our 'wood notes wild' live for ever. In the many published editions of Scottish song and poetry their creators leave behind a lasting monument, but what of our Scottish vocalists? They too soon may be forgotten. The Scotland

of to-day and the Scotland of the future is, perhaps, not likely to produce again such a glorious trio as we had in Wilson, Templeton, and Kennedy. Like Wilson and Templeton, Kennedy sang himself into the hearts of his countrymen throughout the world; like Wilson, he died in harness in Canada. Dear to the heart of Kennedy was the memory of John Wilson. On his first visit to Quebec many years ago, one of his first acts was to visit the last resting place of our beloved sweet singer; finding it somewhat dilapidated, he had the monument restored at his own expense, and arranged that the turf should be kept green on his grave and the flowers renewed, so long as he lived—in this respect reminding us of Burns at the grave of Ferguson. Only last month 'The Kennedy Family' were at the grave of Wilson, affectionately gathering a few flowers to send to their friends 'at hame.' A monument to Mr Kennedy in the Grange Cemetery may surely be regarded as a matter of course, but what more fitting than that three linked names should be commemorated in the romantic capital of Scotland by a triple monument, such as was raised in Germany to their three first printers—Wilson, who was the first to give Scottish entertainments, occupying the central position, supported on either side by Templeton and Kennedy? Let Scotsmen throughout the world gather, say, a shilling subscription for the purpose, and it could be done. I make the suggestion, and leave it with confidence in the hands of the many public-spirited sons of Scotland."

Our reference to the late Mr Kennedy leads us to open the list of deceased poets by referring to the death of Mr David Kennedy, his eldest son, whose career we sketched in our Fifth Series. Mr Kennedy died at Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, in December 1885. He was the author of several works describing the foreign tours of the family. In 1880 he went to South Africa, and acted for some time as sub-editor on the *Natal Witness*, in which capacity he was thoroughly successful, and held in much esteem. In 1883 he returned to this country, and employed himself in contributing to *Chambers's Journal* and other magazines. Owing to ill-health, however, he was compelled to return to Pietermaritzburg, and the high estimate which had been formed of his abilities during his short stay there on the former occasion obtained for him the appointment of Secretary

to the Council of Education in Natal, an office which he filled till his death.

Hugh Brown, sketched in the Third Series of this work, died at Glasgow in August, 1885, in the 85th year of his age. His taste for poetry was of early growth. In 1825 some of his effusions appeared in the *Scots Magazine*, while his poem "The Poets' Wishes" has a place in the first number of *Hogg's Instructor*. Mr Brown was a teacher in Galston, Lanark, and other places, but when the infirmities of age crept upon him he removed to Glasgow, where he was for a time in the employment of Wm. Collins, Sons, & Co., as a "reader." Latterly he was solely dependent on friends for support, and during the year of his death his claims were brought under the attention of Mr Gladstone, who responded by forwarding a cheque for £50. Brown's memory will be preserved on account of his admirable poem "The Covenanters," first published, with other poems, in Glasgow in 1838.

Robert Mennon, familiarly known as "The Ayton Bard"—see Third Series—died in January 1885. He had nearly completed his eighty-eighth year, and though for some time a feeble step and dim eye had indicated the sure approach of dissolution, he, until a few weeks previous, enjoyed good health, and the full use of an active, vigorous intellect. We have already told his life-story. In 1869 he published a large and handsome volume, entitled "Poems, Moral and Religious." He fell in love with the bewitching art of poesy when a mere youth, and he made it an inseparable companion until death, even in lucid intervals during his death-illness, turning into verse incidents that occurred in his room. A few weeks before his death he sent us a poem full of tender feeling, entitled "Sunny Blinks through the Cloud of Old Age," of which the following is the concluding stanza :—

"Oh ! may it be my greatest care
At my fireside,
To seek for grace by earnest prayer
At my fireside.
And may I join at my last breath
That holy fireside after death,
The hame o' a' wha live by faith,
At their fireside.

Rev. Charles Marshall, author of "Lays and Lectures," &c., a native of Paisley, and sketched in Second Series, died in June 1882. He was in his eighty-eighth year, and had continued to minister in the Free North Church, Dunfermline, from 1841 till 1866, when, under the pressure of failing health, he retired from the care of the congregation, and transferred his residence to Edinburgh. He was a thorough master of the Scottish dialect, and could use it with fine picturesque effect both in speech and in writing. A worker all through, he continued to work up to the day of his death. There were found in his desk, and newly from his pen, pieces of verse bearing upon his approaching end. When he was carried in from the street, where he had been thrown down by a passing cab, and when he was laid upon the bed, he said that they had "laid him down to die." In the words of a little poem we had from him giving a pleasant picture of Christian life at eventide, he says :—

"I served my God in my youthfu' days,
When strength was firm and heart was hale;
He fills me wi' faith, and love, and praise,
And serves me now when auld and frail.

My spirit draws in immortal juice
Frae God's true Vine that quickens me;
High up in the courts o' God's ain house
I'll grow a grand, a stately tree."

Archibald M'Kay, the historian of Kilmarnock, noticed in our Second Series, died in 1883, in his eighty-second year. A satirical poem, entitled "Drouthy Tam," was printed by him in 1828, and attracted much attention. He was also well-known as the author of the popular song, "My First Bawbee." In 1844 he issued a small volume of poems and sketches, and in 1855 appeared "Ingleside Lilts." In 1848 he produced the "History of Kilmarnock," which has passed through four editions. Mr M'Kay, who was a native of Kilmarnock, was originally a weaver, and afterwards a bookbinder.

Mrs Jane Cross Simpson, the gifted author of the well-known hymn, "Go When the Morning Shineth," died at Aberdeen in June 1886, in her eightieth year. Particulars of her career and works appear in our Eighth Series, while at page 379 of this volume we give a few particulars of her last years, along with memorial lines and other pieces by her daughters, Mrs Napier

and Miss Rebecca Simpson. Mrs Simpson was a sister of the late Sheriff Henry Glassford Bell. She published several volumes of poetry full of elevating thought and delicacy, and we feel assured that the hymn we have already referred to, which is known all over the English-speaking world, will of itself suffice to preserve her memory in the coming generations. The writer of "Literary Notes" in the *N. B. Mail* wrote as follows at the time of her death:—"During the last four years of her life Mrs Simpson was a constant contributor both of prose and verse to the pages of the *Christian Leader*; and of the poetical fruit of her old age it may justly be said that it constituted the most exquisite addition that has been made by any writer to the sacred verse of Scotland. Jane Bell became Mrs Simpson by her marriage with her cousin, Mr J. B. Simpson, a man of wide reading, and somewhat accomplished also as an artist as well as a bibliographer, who officiated for nine years as librarian of Stirling's Public Library in Glasgow, and who published a volume of "Literary and Dramatic Sketches."

John M'Intosh died of consumption in Dundee in January 1886, in his thirty-seventh year. A selection of his poetical pieces has a place in our Fifth Series. He was a native of Grantown, in the valley of the Spey, and was the author of several beautiful ballads and songs. A week or two before his death he wrote as follows from the Dundee Royal Infirmary to the editor of the *People's Journal*, asking him to print a song entitled "The Lads Wha Wield the Thorn"—"I am as weak as a child with consumption, and no hope for me. I have apparently let it go too far, and they seem to think here that I should turn my thoughts heavenward. If you can see your way to grant me this favour I shall feel greatly obliged. If, on the other hand, you fear that it might be the means of causing you to be flooded with others of the same, I will bow to the inevitable, and with a sigh acknowledge that the last *stick* had been filled for, yours truly, John M'Intosh." The deceased poet left a widow to struggle with a helpless family of five young children, one of them blind.

Rev. Dr J. M. Whitelaw, the parish minister of Athelstaneford, Haddington, died since we sketched his career in the Second

Series. He was the author of several interesting works of fiction, and began to write verse at an early age. His poetry is deeply spiritual in sentiment, and presents pictures of lowly life, sweet in tone and graceful in expression. The parish over which he ministered is famous as being at one time the charge of Blair, the author of "The Grave," and of Home, who wrote the tragedy of "Douglas."

Kenneth M'Lachlan, Greenock, a prolific writer, who was widely esteemed as a poet, as a citizen, and as a friend, died in September 1885. The varied experiences of his life are depicted in our First Series, and from the selections we have given from his productions, our readers will agree with us in saying that he held a high place among the modern poets of Scotland. His first volume was "The Progress of the Sciences," a sustained effort of great power and clear style. Then followed "Scenes of the City by Night," regarding which George Gilfillan said that they were "written with a vividness akin to Crabbe." "Hope's Happy Home, and other Poems," displayed the same versatility of genius and a growing facility in the use of the pen; while "The Beauties of Scotland" exhibited some of the strongest and most loveable traits of deceased's character. The notes in connection with this last volume are exceedingly lucid, and are marked by a pure literary style. Patriotism, loyalty, and love of home are themes that he delighted to celebrate in song, and all his writings show that he had a pure and noble heart, and bore an ardent love for his native land—the praises of whose mountains, lakes, and rivers, he has celebrated in strains of much sweetness.

Peter M'Crackett, a native of Greenlaw, Berwickshire, died at Greenock in 1882. A sketch of his life appears in our Second Series. Many of his poems abound in true pathos and genuine beauty. Mr M'Crackett occupied an excellent position as a teacher. He was a gentleman of quiet and retiring habits, much given to study and the cultivation of literary tastes.

Jean Logan Watson (see Fourth Series) possessed a fertile and many-sided pen. She died in Edinburgh in October 1885, and her removal made a blank deeply felt in the literary circles of that city. Miss Watson belonged to a family long located in the upper part of Peeblesshire, and, although for many years

she resided in Edinburgh, she had enshrined in her heart the scenes and characters with which she was familiar in early life. They were lovingly cherished, often revisited, and have been described by her in "Bygone Days in our Village," and "Round the Grange Farm" in a way that will keep her memory green in the thoughts of those who did not know her or the pleasant land and quaint, warm-hearted country-folks she has pictured. Some of the best little local guidebooks in Scotland have come from her pen, marked with her peculiar liking for legend, and story, and curious traits of human nature. For these she had a wonderful affinity wherever she went, and, on her return from an excursion into some new field, had no greater pleasure than to open her store to some like-minded friend. The late Dr Guthrie and Dr John Brown were chosen depositories on these occasions, and the author of "Rab and his Friends" has acknowledged his obligations to her for some of the old-world fancies and rhymes which were to him so congenial. She was fervently Scottish in all her tastes and associations, and was drawn powerfully, both by her feeling of romance and her deep religious convictions, to that distinctively Scottish period, the Reformation and the Covenant. She knew the history of the men of the time, their character, their haunts and hiding-places, their sayings and speeches, as if she had wandered with them in the moors, and heard their dying voices in the Grassmarket. Her little biographies of Knox, Cameron, Peden, Renwick, and others have done much to keep alive and refresh memories that make the heart's blood of the true Scottish people run warmer and quicker. In the same series of books she has sketched the Erskines, Chalmers, Candlish, Guthrie, Macleod, and others. These were the combination of her religious liking in more modern times.

Mrs Harriet Miller Davidson, sketched in our Third Series, died at Adelaide, South Australia, in December 1883, in her forty-fourth year. She was the elder daughter of the late Hugh Miller—one whose memory Scotland holds in just esteem—and widow of the Rev. John Davidson, professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Adelaide, who died in 1881. In the "Life and Letters" of her father a very pretty picture is given of "Little Ha Ha"—as Harriet Miller called herself when a child.

Even at an early age she is credited with having had a certain natural gift for song and poetry, and as she grew up she did not lose the power of expressing her feelings in attractive rhyme. Mrs Davidson wrote several tales and sketches of much merit, and was altogether a woman of wide culture, and endowed with many personal gifts and graces.

Hugh D. Hargrave, bricklayer, a native of Parkhead, died in May 1883, ere he had completed his twenty-ninth year. He was noticed in our Second Series as a poet of unassuming but genuine talent. Shortly after his death, a volume of "Poems, Songs, and Essays" was published by T. W. Farrell & Co., Glasgow, for the benefit of his widow and three children.

Andrew Steel, author of one or more volumes of poetry—a native of Coldstream, and noticed in our Third Series—died in 1882, in his seventy-first year. He was a shoemaker to trade, and for many years was a contributor of poetry to Border newspapers.

Dr J. A. Sidey, Edinburgh, died in February 1886, in his sixty-first year. He was a well-known medical practitioner, and much respected not only on account of his eminent abilities as a surgeon but also because of his many amiable qualities. He took a great interest in literary pursuits, and wrote a number of amusing works for children that have obtained a wide circulation. Being passionately fond of curling, he wrote several delightful songs on the game that are well known to lovers of the sport. These, with others, were published by M'Lachlan & Stewart in December 1868, under the title of *Mistura Curiosa*. This volume was illustrated by John Smart, R.S.A., and Charles Doyle. A second volume, which was issued in 1876, bore the title *Alter Ejusdem*. Dr Sidey was one of the original members of a private club known as "The Monks of St Giles"—a semi-literary and convivial society of gentlemen which was established in 1852, and still exists. It was for the meetings of this Club that his songs were largely written—one of the rules being that the "Prior" or chairman for the night must produce an original song or other composition. A selection of Dr Sidey's productions has a place in Third Series.

James M. Neilson, a notice of whose career and writings appeared in our First Series, died in November, 1883. He was the

author of a volume of superior Scottish verse, published in 1877. For some time previous to his death he had been in ill health, and the disease latterly took the form of a slow decline. He died in his thirty-ninth year, leaving a widow and three young children.

James Smith, who was acknowledged as one of the most successful teachers who figured for nearly half a century in his native town of Forfar, died at Govan, in September 1885. He was in his seventy-second year, and, as will be seen from First Series, began life as a handloom weaver. For two years he had enjoyed a well-earned retirement, and was on a visit to his friends when his death took place somewhat suddenly. Mr Smith devoted his leisure hours to the cultivation of the Muse, and for many years his *nom-de-plume* of "Vinney" was familiar to readers of the Dundee newspapers.

William Cross, who has the first place in our Sixth Series, died in Glasgow in October 1886, in his eighty-second year. In addition to his being the author of a volume of delightful poetry and one of the contributors to "Whistle Binkie," he also wrote "The Disruption," a story that, in the widest sense, was a household word in Scotland during the exciting times that followed the year 1843. The latest of an honoured and long list of Paisley-born poets who have gone home, Mr Cross was a man of great moral and poetic worth, and only less known than many inferior men because of his patient modesty. The *Evening Times* of Glasgow, referring to his death, said:—"Mr Cross was an actual poet, one of those unpretentious 'makers' who have enriched the poetic literature of Scotland with many of her most delightful ballads and songs. Two of his songs—'The Canting Auld Kimmer' and the 'Dainty Bit Plan'—are so pawkily and exquisitely humorous that they will carry his name to generations of readers. They are flashes of genius. Tannahill could not have dreamed them; and only Burns could have equalled, but could hardly have surpassed them. But Mr Cross could strike a serious note; and some of his pieces show that, as clearly as most poets, he could see through the lattice-work of symbol and the fretwork of life, the Divinity that illumes alike the heart of Nature and the soul of Man. He will be missed and

mourned by all who know how much of her best moral and poetic repute Scotland owes to such men. He is another jewel in Paisley's already rich poetic crown.

David Grant, teacher, whose prolonged and struggling career is traced in the present volume, died at Edinburgh in April last after a long illness, aged sixty-three years. We refer to him in this paper, when we speak of the man of wide culture and learning. He was largely endowed with "the vision and the faculty divine." Mr Walker, in his "Bards of Bon Accord," says of Grant's volumes—"Metrical Tales," and "Lays and Legends of the North"—that "he tells a story in pithy and effective rhyme, and with an easy, pleasant swing rarely found outside the old ballad-mongers. The command he had of the mother tongue was that of a master equally at home in singing the pathetic, the comic, or the tragic; while the fineness of his ear, and his accurate sense of metrical movement, gave his verse a musical charm seldom sustained for any length of time by writers in the vernacular." By his death a widow and two young children have been left entirely destitute; and with a view to enable Mrs Grant to get a start in the way of earning a living and educate her children by keeping lodgers, an appeal was made to the kindly sympathy and aid of those to whom the deceased, who was a native of Banchory, was known, personally or by his pen.

William Cowper, another teacher-poet, to whom we have given a place in the First Series, died at Hillside, Montrose, in July 1886, in his seventy-fourth year. Mr Cowper was eminently self-made, and a man of wide culture and knowledge. Besides being scholarly, he had fine literary tastes, and was author of a volume of poems of keen fancy and excellent reflective powers, entitled "At midnight with the Book and the Stars."

Alexander Burgess, dancing-master, some of whose effusions appear in our First Series, died at the advanced age of seventy-eight, in August last. He resided at Coupmahorn, near Kennoway, Fifeshire. He was author of a volume entitled "The Book of Nettercaps: or Poutery, Poetry, and Prose," and was well known as a teacher of dancing. His skill on the violin was such as earned for him the name of the Fife Paganini. Having received little school education, his acquirements were due

to his natural talent and self-culture. Under the *nom de plume* of "Poute," he was a regular contributor to the *People's Journal*. His poetic contributions were characterised by a grotesque orthography that was as suggestive of latent, lurking fun as the ideas were thoroughly original and humorous to the degree of burlesque.

JOHN WILSON WOOD, merchant—see Third Series—died at Cupar-Fife in June 1885, in his fifty-first year. He possessed abilities of no mean order, and published several volumes of poetry, including "The Serpent Round the Soul," "The Gipsy Heir," and "Ceres Races." Mr Wood gave free scope to his faculty of rich humour, and could sketch very effectively the peculiarities and the customs of the surrounding villagers.

GEORGE GIBB, for many years a railway official, died at the age of fifty-nine, in Aberdeen, in January 1884. His numerous poetical effusions, with the simple initials "G. G.," were deservedly admired as they appeared almost weekly in the newspapers of Aberdeen and Dundee. We sketch his career in Third Series.

PETER BEGG, librarian in the office of the *Dundee Advertiser*, died in March 1885, aged sixty-six. A selection of his poetry appears in our Fourth Series. Mr Begg was altogether a notable man in his day, had fine literary tastes, and was endowed with considerable sagacity, energy, and enthusiasm. For many years he took an active part in the public life of Dundee.

GEORGE TURNER, a native of Ayrshire, died at Arbroath in March 1886. He was eighty years of age, and had for many years been totally blind. The author of several very tender and touching poems, including "The Camstane Laddie," and "The Shifter's Lament," of more than local fame, he was noteworthy as being the inventor of a writing machine for the use of the blind. Mr Turner has a place in our Fifth Series.

FRANK HENRIETTA, author of "Poems and Lyrics," a volume of homely and pleasing verse, and possessing much real humour, is noticed in Fifth Series. He also wrote several tales and sketches, principally referring to his ten years' experiences of soldier life in India. Mr Henrietta, who was a native of Glasgow, died somewhat suddenly at Airdrie in July, 1883.

William M'Queen was perhaps better known as a Scottish novelist than as a poet, although he published a selection of poetry, which is peculiarly catching in its felicitous humour and descriptive power. He also published several charming tales of Scottish life and character. A condensed style of narrative, a ready perception of the dramatic in life and character, a felicitous smartness of dialogue, and a certain dry humour, were qualities in a story-teller which the public were quick to acknowledge, and which ensured for all his novels, as they appeared in the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, an ever-increasing popularity. Mr M'Queen died in Glasgow in March, 1885, at the age of forty-four. In our First Series we trace his career, from his solitary tramp across the Isthmus of Panama till he became connected with the *Mail*, in the leading columns of which he was a regular contributor for a number of years.

Alexander Reid, a native of Perth, and sketched in the Fifth Series, died suddenly at Bridge of Allan in June last, in his forty-fourth year. He had been laid aside from work in Glasgow for three months, and had gone to Bridge of Allan, as was fondly hoped, to complete his convalescence, but the end came within two or three weeks after his arrival there. In the words of his friend and brother poet, Mr H. Dryerre :—

> "The song is hushed, but hearts move on
> To finer issues subtly drawn,
> We follow with a trustful eye
> The singer lost in distant sky,—
> His song of earth new meaning given,
> To draw us up with him to Heaven."

A memorial volume of Mr Reid's poems and lyrics is about to be published, and our readers will find that these breathe a spirit of warm love and admiration for everything good, and true, and beautiful.

Thomas Young, almost the last of the genial contributors to "Whistle-Binkie," a native of Dundee, died at Tayport in May 1886, in his 80th year. Mr Young held an appointment in the Sasine Department of the Register House, Edinburgh, for thirty-four years, and retired on a pension. An account of his career is given in the Seventh Series. He was the author of a volume

of poems, a third edition of which was published shortly before his death.

William Thomson, author of a volume of poetry entitled "Leddy May and other Poems," died in Glasgow after much suffering in 1883. Although he had only seen two-and-twenty summers, he excelled in the difficult art of ballad writing, while his miscellaneous poems and lyrics are sweet and perspicuous, full of real tenderness, bristling with subtle thoughts, and sparkling with gems of imagery. His "Songs from the French,' too, are rendered in quaint, homely vernacular; and while the original is sufficiently preserved, the translation is easy, idiomatic, and natural. Indeed all that he has written is full of genius, and had he produced nothing more than his exquisitely beautiful and delicately expressive ballad "The Maister and the Bairns," it was sufficient to preserve his memory while the Scottish language continues to be understood. Details of his short life are given in the Fifth Series.

Since we began this work other gifted bards are no longer with us, and their lyres now lie silent. Our sole reason, however, for dealing with their memories in a summary manner is solely on account of the limited space now available, or from the fact that we have been unable to procure fuller details. Some of these had spent a long life of usefulness, and were well, known and much respected, including the Rev. Dr Longmuir-Aberdeen, a voluminous author, sketched in Second Series; Mr Peter M'Arthur and Mrs Margaret Wallace, Glasgow, who have a place in our First Series. Others, though they had reached the allotted span, went to their rest after a life of anxiety and more battling with the world, as, for example, Joseph Teenan, Edinburgh, whose career is dealt with in Second Series; while, on the other hand, we have those who only reached, and some who had not attained, the years of manhood, and gave promise of future greatness, when they were called away. Of the first-mentioned we have to note James K. Scott, author of "Galloway Gleanings," and James Carnegie Figg (who died, we have heard, in Australia during the present year), both sketched in Fourth Series; and A. E. Thomson, artist and

poet (Seventh Series), who died in July last in London in his twenty-third year.

Our obituary roll would be incomplete were we to omit making mention of the death of Mr Alexander Gardyne, London, who died in September, 1885, aged eighty-four. A native of Arbroath, he left that town when a young man, and became a merchant in Calcutta. About twenty-six years ago he returned to this country, and made London his home. There he devoted himself to literary pursuits. He possessed one of the most unique collections of books ever made by a private individual in this country—indeed he was, to use the words of the late Dr Hill Burton, a "book-hunter," and his library comprised a great many curious and rare books, a large number of them illustrative of the history, topography, biography, and poetry of Scotland, together with numerous specimens of dramatic literature, and an extensive collection of psalmody and hymnology. He had over 300 volumes of works on the Psalms of David alone, many of them exceedingly rare and scarce, and the MSS. notes he had attached to them are valuable. Three years ago Mr Gardyne made the munificent donation of 1300 "books and booklets" in Scottish poetry to the Poets' Corner of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. This poetical "Corner" contained in 1885 about 5050 volumes, embracing the writings of about 2000 authors, and no fewer than 339 separate editions of the works of Burns. Mr Wm. Wilson, treasurer of the "Poets' Corner," in his most recent report wrote as follows:—"The poetical literature of Scotland has long been recognised to be of quite exceptional extent and richness, and probably no country is more rich, possibly so rich, in local or rural, or, as it is sometimes called, peasant poetry. The writings of these local poets over all the country, in addition to their literary value, preserve in many cases, local dialects, and local customs, and local memories, which are fast passing away. It is surely worth while that in one public library in the country there should be set apart a storehouse for these treasures, where they will be carefully kept, and preserved for future generations of readers. The hope is cherished that in this section the Mitchell Library will render a real service to students of our national literature, by

placing within their reach means so ample for the study of what is, perhaps, its most distinctive and characteristic feature."

Having thus, in a sense, laid this wreath upon the gentle grave of our deceased poets, what more is it necessary for us to do? Whatever the relation here, it comes to this—we must bid each other farewell. It is a necessity of human life. The pilgrim must go on his solitary journey. May we that are left have grace to say farewell aright—may we have grace to say it aright when others have to say it to us! In the case of many of them their name and memory will live in the literature of their country long after we are gone, and perhaps forgotten. In the slightly-altered words of Allan Cunningham—a noble-hearted man, as well as a true poet—

They hae gane to dwall in heaven,
They hae gane to dwall in heaven,
They were owre pure, quo' the voice o' God,
For dwallin' oot o' heaven.

O! what'll they do in heaven?
O! what'll they do in heaven?
They'll mix their ain thoughts wi' angel's sangs,
An' mak' them mair meet for heaven.

Amid our toil and silent sorrow there dawns the day when "Heaven's gate stands ope," and the work is all put by. And although it is our duty every morning manfully to take up our task, and, like the "village blacksmith," toil at the forge of life, there are memories that will not sleep—there are graves kept green in every soul. It is no sin to yearn towards them sometimes with eyes bedewed and dim; but the Lord, who wept, draws near to hush the heartache, and to wipe away all tears.

"Open the windows and let in more light" was the cry of the dying poet; but "there shall be no night there." Ever as we toil here amid the mysteries of being, till a fitful ray comes in and shoots down into what depths we are exploring, these seem only the deeper in the momentary flash, and we cry "more light!" But our friends now *see* in the unchanging noontide of Heaven. Ours is no uncertain gleam of hope. We may be incapable of reading line by line the evidence of Divine mercy while it is

being unrolled before our eyes ; we may not as yet comprehend the language, but we must not doubt the tenderness of Him who holds for us the mystic record, and wants to lead us upward to the Promised Land, where all that has been dark shall be made clear. The simple-minded, pure-hearted, uneducated, whose name on earth only remains in the family Bible register, and whose bones, as David Gray says, may lie in "unescutcheoned privacy," will perceive as clearly, and with as perfect delight, in his degree and measure of capacity, as the philosopher who has spent a lifetime in researches that have made his name famous throughout the world. De Quincey was a name that one would have thought would not have been soon forgot, at least in Scotland, yet, strange to say, Professor Masson lately wrote—"Not one in two thousand of the inhabitants of Edinburgh at this moment knows where he is buried, or that he is buried in Edinburgh at all, and not once in a year does any one of the select hundred who may be aware of the fact and the place think of visiting the humble grave."

We propose to sip again from the overflowing cups of refreshing water that others have yet to offer to us, and add yet another volume to delight (we humbly trust) our readers—in the summer evenings under the shade of the trees, while the faint rustle of leaves, and streams, and insects is faintly heard as an accompaniment to the poets' lays. By the couthy ingleside through the long winter evenings, and while the storm howls without, it will be found a cheery and edifying companion. The public, which has received with favour eight volumes of "Modern Scottish Poets," will, we trust, welcome with equal friendliness the present, and also the concluding volume ; and we can only now express a hope that our former readers will neither forget the earlier issues —nor their author.

D. H. Edwards.

Advertiser Office,
Brechin, *November 1886.*

MODERN SCOTTISH POETS.

HENRY THOMAS MACKENZIE BELL,

ALTHOUGH born in Liverpool in 1856, is connected with a well-known Scottish family, and has spent much of his time in Auld Scotia. His father, originally a member of the Scotch Colony in the River Plate, and long resident in Buenos Ayres, was, at the time of the birth of our poet, a merchant in Liverpool. His mother is the sister of Thomas Mackenzie, once Solicitor-General for Scotland, eventually a Scotch Judge, and author of "Studies in Roman Law." It was at the house of this uncle when, at the age of three years, he paid his first visit to Edinburgh, that his remembrance opens. In infancy he had the misfortune to have a paralytic seizure, which resulted in partial paralysis of the right side, chiefly affecting the right hand, and necessitating in after years the use of his left hand in writing. It also resulted in his education being almost entirely carried on at home. During his earlier years he was almost constantly under medical treatment for the improvement of his physical condition, and for over a year resided at Malvern. The beauty of this charming place left a permanent impression on his mind, but the treatment he received there did not produce any good effect, and he was taken to Scotland for a sojourn of

fourteen months, spent principally in Edinburgh. There a noted bone setter, Mr Cranston, succeeded in bringing down into its normal condition the heel of the right foot, which had hitherto been drawn up. This happy result had a most cheering effect on the boy's life, as it enabled him to take exercise freely.

In 1874 it was decided that he should go to Edinburgh University with the view of taking his M.A. degree there, afterwards going to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and then entering on a legal career in London. While working hard, however, for the entrance examination at Edinburgh, his health utterly broke down from dyspepsia, and although two of the most eminent London doctors were consulted, they were unable to do him any good. An Edinburgh physician was at length resorted to, under whose treatment he lived for two years solely on farinaceous food and milk. A warm climate was ultimately recommended, and he passed the summer of 1879 in the Pyrenees—living much at Pau and other health resorts. In his travels he visited Madrid, where the works of Murillo first taught him to appreciate good art. He likewise visited Madeira, the Canary Islands, Morocco, and most of the towns of Spain. His residence abroad having so considerably improved his health, he deemed it advisable to spend the following winter on the continent. At that time the greater part of the railway through Calabria had only been opened for a month, and he was thus one of the first British subjects to pass in a nineteenth century manner through a country so intimately connected with the remote past. Seeing the Carnival at Rome, he went northward through Pisa, Leghorn, Genoa, and Paris, returning home in 1881, with health greatly restored. He now lives in Ealing, near London, and appreciates highly the intellectual opportunities that such a residence permits him to enjoy.

When, after his serious illness in 1874, he was able

once more to use his mind, he began to employ his invalid leisure in verse making. One Sunday morning in 1877—though at the time in considerable pain—the first lines of "The Keeping of the Vow" occurred to him, and in two days the whole poem was written. At the time of its completion, he informs us that he was unaware that Professor Aytoun had written on the same theme, or he would probably "not have exposed himself to comparison with so accomplished a master of the historical ballad."

One morning, while sitting in the waiting-room of his dentist, having nothing better to do, it occurred to him to wonder what words rhymed with "dentist." No other word but "apprenticed" suggested itself, and out of this little occurrence arose the second poem we quote.

In 1879 Mr Mackenzie Bell published his first volume of poems, "The Keeping of the Vow, and other Verses" (London: Elliot Stock), consisting of historical pieces, songs, and miscellaneous verses. It was well received by the critics. In 1882 followed "Verses of Varied Life," consisting of miscellaneous pieces written subsequent to the publication of his early volume. "Old Year Leaves" is a handsome and bulky book, first published in 1883. It comprises the contents of his two former works, with a few added poems. In the autumn of 1884 our author published a monograph, entitled "A Forgotten Genius: Charles Whitehead." Whitehead was an early friend of Dickens. He was originally asked to write the work which afterwards became so famous as the "Pickwick Papers." Being unable to do it himself, he recommended Dickens. Whitehead's poetry was much admired by Christopher North, and Dante Rossetti, and of one of his novels Dickens frequently spoke in the highest praise. His career was a sad one—its end tragic. Mr Mackenzie Bell tells the story of his life, and gives copious extracts from his works. The book,

indeed, forms a Whitehead anthology, embracing his best work, has been very favourably received by the most noteworthy critical journals, and will doubtless do much towards gaining for its subject a permanent place in literature.

It should be added that all our poet's works have been published by Elliot Stock, with the exception of the last-mentioned three, of which new editions were issued by T. Fisher Unwin, London, in 1885.

We have left ourselves little space for a critical estimate of the subject of our sketch. Everything he has written will charm the reflective and studious mind—evincing the utterances of a poet of genuine power, and of large thought and sympathy. Few poets in the present time have so profound a feeling for Nature, or excell him in the use he makes of the imagery it suggests. His glowing and abundant fancy, and subtle eye to read its symbolism, as well as his wealth and mastery of language, marks the writer as one full of true poetic sensibility. We ever find present a keen and warm attachment to all that is noble and heroic, as well as a lofty tone of moral feeling. The *British Quarterly Review* bears us out when it says that his poetry "attests a buoyant, healthy nature, open to fine impressions, and quick to turn the ordinary incidents of every day to poetic account. His 'Pictures of Travel' in Spain and Italy are simply admirable in their picturesqueness and power of presenting the typical aspect, and interweaving it with apt lyrical associations."

THE KEEPING OF THE VOW.

King Robert Bruce is dying, uncertain comes his breath,
And the last strife for failing life will soon be won by death;
Around his couch the courtiers stand, and heave full many a sigh,
In dire dismay and grief are they to see their monarch die.

"Sir James of Douglas, come!" he cries, "thou ever wert my friend,
And though we part, 'tis well thou art with me unto the end.
When in great straits, I vowed to God if He would grant to me
That War should cease in perfect peace, and Scotland should be free,
His blessed banner I would bear to sacred Palestine,
With arms to quell the Infidel: such my supreme design.
And grieved am I that here I lie, life ebbing fast away,
This gnawing pain now proving vain the hope my vow to pay.
Then promise me right faithfully, when I am laid at rest,
That with my heart thou wilt depart to do my last behest!"
"I pledge my knightly word, my liege, thy bidding shall be done,
And though so sad, yet I am glad such favour to have won!
Safe in my bosom shall thy trust abide with me for ever,
Unless perchance in peril's hour 'twere best that we should sever."
The king smiles faintly in reply—then gently falls his head,
And on his grand old follower's breast bold Robert Bruce lies dead.

With pennons gay and proud array doth Douglas then depart,
And in a casket carefully he keeps the kingly Heart.
Crossing the main and sighting Spain, he hears of that wild war
Which Moor and Christian long have waged with ceaseless conflict sore;
Forthwith he deems that here it seems his mission first should be,
And with his host soon swells the boast of Spanish chivalry.
The armies twain on Tebas'* plain extend—a splendid sight!
In armour dight with weapons bright, impatient for the fight;
The summer sunbeams on the shields of warriors brave are glancing,
And o'er the plain spurs many a man with charger proudly prancing,
Whose gallant crest stirred by the breeze, full gaily now is dancing,
While each Moslem there with scimitar, upon his Arab horse,
Moves with a calm courageous mien, unswerving in his course:
And thus at length the stately strength the Cross and Crescent wield,
As deadly foes now darkly close upon this fatal field.
The Spaniards' stroke hath bravely broke the dense opposing line!
Yet none the less both armies press around their standard-sign,
And though many a Paynim late so proud lies lifeless on the plain,
While good Castilian jennet's seen unguided by the rein.
First in the van the Douglas rides, with all his men-at-arms,—
A valiant company they are, inured to war's alarms,

* On the borders of Andalusia.

The veterans of a hundred fields, for whom it had its charms,—
With spur and rein they onward strain on the retreating foe,
And in the chase can scarcely trace the road by which they go,
Till, looking back upon their track, with horror now they see
The ranks opposed once more have closed—they are in jeopardy!
"We find full late the danger great," Sir Douglas cries,
"Return!
And charge the foe like Scots who know the rout at Bannockburn;
Surely the men who vanquished then vain Edward's vast array
No caitiff Moor can e'er o'ercome on this victorious day!"
Thus speaking, swift he turns his steed, and gallops to the rear,
Mid battle's tide his dauntless ride as gallant doth appear,
As the swimmer's strife who strives for life, yet feels no craven fear,
And as they passed the blows fell fast: stern was the conflict wild,
With steeds and men, who ne'er again would rise, the field was piled.
Yet Douglas true, with still a few, have almost cut their way
With wondrous force—resistless—straight through the grim array,
When glancing quickly round, he sees, still struggling in the fight,
The noble Walter St. Clair, a very valiant knight.
They oft were nigh in days gone by, on many a bloody field,
And oft had they in tournay gay their chargers swiftly wheeled—
"Ride to the rescue!" Douglas shouts, "dash on and do not spare,
To save yon matchless comrade which man of you will not dare!"
Urging his horse with headlong force, he rushes to his aid,
And many a tunic's fold is cleft by his resistless blade;
Yet he is left of friends bereft—fierce foemen all around,
And mid the roar of mortal strife of succour not a sound.
Now snatches he the jewelled casque in which the Heart reposes
('Twas strange to see how lovingly his hand upon it closes),
And flings it forward 'mong the foe around him, with the cry,
"Press on, brave Heart, as thou wert wont: I follow thee or die!"
With lifted lance he makes advance to where his treasure fell,
Each crash of blow—now fast, now slow—like a rude requiem knell,
And left alone, yet ne'er o'erthrown, he grapples with the foe,
Until a sword-thrust piercing him at last doth lay him low;
Then gallantly he fights a while, half kneeling on the plain,
And there, exhausted by his wounds, he finally is slain.

So died this grand old hero! In Douglas kirk he sleeps,
While History the record proud of his achievements keeps.

WAITING FOR THE DENTIST.

Though many dismal years I've been
To dull old Care apprenticed,
The worst of the small woes I've seen
Is—waiting for the dentist!

How dreary is the cheerless room
In which you bide his pleasure,
The very chairs seemed steeped in gloom,
And sorrow without measure.

As if so wild mute-molar grief,
So uncontrolled its swelling,—
That its fierce tide had sought relief
By deluging the dwelling.

What though of literature a store
Is lying on the table,
You only think the books a bore;
To read you are unable.

What from the window, though, perchance,
You see forms full of graces,
They merely make you look askance,
And think how sore your face is.

On many chairs and sofas, too,
More martys round you languish,
You glance at them, they glance at you,
And give a groan of anguish.

You deem it hard, their turn arrives
Before you in rotation,
Or they wax wroth that your's deprives
Their case of consolation.

You muse upon the ruthless wrench
Which buys a tooth's departing—
Or how the stopping-pangs to quench,
In which you may be starting;

Or haply on those ivory chips
Harsh Nature may deny you,—
But which the "golden key" equips
Man's genius to supply you.

No words your mood of mind express,
'Tis a state devoid of quiet,—
In which pain, pleasure, and distress
Mingle in hopeless riot.

Yes, though much sorrow one must know,
While to old Care apprenticed,
The greatest unheroic woe
Is—waiting for the dentist.

THE HEART'S SUMMER.

Sweet is the noon of a summer day
While low the bees are humming,
And the village sounds seem far away
When through the woodlands coming.

Sweet are the hours of a summer night
When the diamond dews are falling,
And dreams come with the fading light,
Soft, soothing, and enthralling.

Sweet are the tones of a friendly voice,
Speaking sympathy in sorrow,
Whilst bidding us once more rejoice,
And from Love's store-house borrow.

Sweet is the wondering world's applause
When fame at last hath found us,
And (guerdon for toil in a righteous cause)
Flings victory's wreath around us.

But sweeter far is a heart at rest,
A heart ne'er soured by sadness—
Which throbs within a blissful breast
With a God-imparted gladness.

HEART ECHOES.

While the sunlight's glory dying
Tints the pebbly sea-kissed strand,
And the night-chilled breezes sighing,
See the shadows wrap the land—
Faint, yet powerful, sad, yet tender,
Come fond thoughts of vanished years,
Waking sweet soul-thrills that render
Joy that is akin to tears.
Ah, how real are these dreams!
And the past the present seems.

Visions of a gentle maiden
Beautiful and pure as fair,
And of eves whose gales love-laden
Wanton with her auburn hair:
For 'twas when soft summer's beauty
Made the earth with gladness rife

First I felt, as well as duty,
What deep joy might be in life:
Ah, how real are these dreams!
And the past the present seems.

Memories are swiftly thronging
Of that span of treasured past,
When the joy to me belonging
Was, alas! too bright to last:
Still do I remember clearly
What I asked with trembling voice,
And her words, "I love you dearly,
And am proud to be your choice."
Ah, how real are these dreams!
And the past the present seems.

We were "wedded, happy-hearted,"
And our future path seemed bright,
Who could tell we should be parted,
Love's glad sun obscured in night?
Yet before another spring-tide
Shed abroad its myriad charms,
Bitter blow! my darling left me,—
Dying calmly in my arms.
Ah, how real, fraught with woe
Rise these dreams of long ago!

Still amid my sore dejection,
In its comfort ever new,
Comes the soothing, sweet reflection,
To each other we were true.
For some end God sendeth sorrow,
And when this at length is gained
I shall meet my bride in Heaven
Happy, holy, and unstained.
There no longer fraught with woe
Rise the dreams of long ago.

QUIETUDE.

"Quietude, O quietude,"
My soul is sadly sighing;
For thee, in a mournful mood,
I ceaselessly am crying;
But a voice murmurs softly clear,
"*True* quietude is never here."

Quietude, O quietude,
Come while Life's waves I'm breasting,
Bringing with thee all things good,
Pure peace, and joy, and resting,—

Yet still the voice—"No, never here
Can *perfect* quietude appear."

Quietude, O quietude,
Grant me a single token
That sometimes Life's conflict rude
By perfect peace is broken;
But a voice whispers in my ear,
"*True* quietude is never here."

Quietude, O quietude,
Mine earthly course is ending,
Come, and now within me brood,
Each sin-stained fetter rending;
Breathes then the voice with silver sound,
"In *Heaven* true quietude is found."

THE POET'S POWERLESSNESS.

Unto the poet's mental eye how clear
Appears a scene he would in wise words weave
Into the varied texture of his verse!
A scene it is of beauty unsurpassed,—
Of hoary mountains whose gigantic peaks
Approach the sky,—of a fair wooded vale,—
And of a rushing rivulet, whose sound
Re-echoes in his ears. A simple theme
Methinks to handle, yet at once he finds
How hard it is to choose the magic words
With which to make the spell he trusts will bind
The senses of his readers. Ever thus
He feels it in description,—also when
Depicting subtle feelings of the soul,—
Indeed in every subject meet for song:—
And so he feels that words are at the best
Most ineffective colours to paint well
A theme Imagination-glorified.

DAVID GOW

BELONGS to the younger generation of our poets, and is at present little more than a mere boy; but notwithstanding his extreme youth, the quality of the poetry he has already produced is such that he well deserves to be represented in this collection. Des-

cended from a very old Scottish family, he was born in December, 1865. His father, who was a wealthy merchant, died when David was an infant, and his mother, marrying again, took the boy to England with her, where he has since remained, although ever cherishing a natural affinity for all things Scotch. David Gow was sent to school at Cheltenham, where he had the reputation of being a dunce in all subjects but composition. At the age of fourteen he entered a lawyer's office in Gloucester, where he continued until his removal to London, where he was employed in turn by two or three different business houses, including Messrs M'Corquodale, printers. Finding commerce uncongenial to him, however, he sought a return to the law, and was fortunate enough to secure an engagement in a city firm of solicitors, with whom he has since continued. His duties being light, he has contrived to indulge his literary proclivities during the intervals of office work. A notion of his literary industry may be gained by the knowledge that, though only nineteen, he has written more poetry than either Gray or Collins' produced, and all his verses have been printed, and generally admired wherever they have been read. At an early age he commenced to contribute to a well known London periodical, in which he has been regularly represented every week for the last few years.

In his early verse there are signs of immaturity, but even his most youthful effusions gave promise of power, and his later compositions are of a graceful and varied kind. Few young poets have so neatly dressed their thoughts in the form of verse most exactly suiting them. Almost every form of stanza has been attempted successfully by Mr Gow. He is a poet of Nature rather than of the affections, but there are several of his pieces, such as "Glengowan Nell," that have about them something of the spontaneous simplicity of Tannahill.

STARS.

Oh, little stars ! if ye are "angels' eyes,"
What language in your liquid depths is shown !
Ye mantle with the waves of thought, each one.
A mystic meaning in each bright orb lies,
Seen by the child, but hidden from the wise—
Read by the soul, but to the mind unknown,
Which sees a star but as a precious stone
Set in the blue enamel of the skies.

Oh, stars ! ye are as harbour lights that glow
Along the shores of the celestial clime,
That, when earth darkens on the spirit, grow
Brighter and brighter at its evening time,
Even as the darkness of material night
Makes your pale sparks to shine with deepened light.

SONNET.

Lo ! where the drumly stream, with sluggish flow,
Pours its dark flood among the frowning firs,
That bend like nodding feathers on a hearse,
The shrill notes of the woodlark's piccolo
Mock the sad amours of the winds that blow,
The sighing zephyrs, love-sick wanderers,
Wooing some modest forest flower, that stirs
Shyly responsive to their murmured woe.

Pipe on, thou merry woodlark, and deride
The pensive passion of the amorous winds,
Mayhap to find, as man who has defied
The potency of love not seldom finds,
That of the passions which invade the breast,
The most resistless is the tenderest.

GLENGOWAN NELL.

When morning had risen on meadow and moorland,
And the lav'rock was bursting with music on high,
And briny sea-breezes blew over the foreland,
And drove the white cloudlets like sheep through the sky,
'Twas then I first saw her so pensively sitting
Upon a green gowan-gemmed knowe in the dell,
Around her were gay painted butterflies flitting—
They thought her a flower, my Glengowan Nell.

At noontide we walked where the forest trees shaded
Our path, and I showed her, where, scorched with the heat,
The gay flow'rs that grew in the gardens had faded,
While the blue-bell was fresh in its woodland retreat,

And I saw by her eyes she had fathomed my meaning
As we stood where the foaming linn noisily fell,
And I wandered along its green banks, till the e'ening
Burned bright in the west, with my Glengowan Nell.

At night at the gate of her garden I lingered,
When all the gay lilts of the birdies were stilled,
And as her blue apron she restlessly fingered,
I saw her grey eyes with sweet shyness were filled.
A pale drooping blue-bell I plucked, and gave to her—
The little flow'r told her all I had to tell,
And the love-star shone brightly that night on the wooer,
For now I have won her, my Glengowan Nell!

THE MARSH-LIGHT.

Where lies the lower moorland,
In the bleak and rugged Norland,
The tufted heather grows,
Like a tiny bush of broom,
If it had but yellow bloom
Where its pink beads hang in rows
On their stems, and softly swing
Above some silent spring,
Pellucid, fresh, and sweet,
Though paved with sable peat,
And loam and dusky moss,
Where bending bracken blows
And painted shadows throws,
Into the pools beneath;
The curlew flies across
The stretch of barren heath,
And the fen-fowls wade and swim
Till the light of day grows dim.

The stars, like rushlights, glimmer
On the treeless plain below,
And the fen-pools dance and shimmer
In their pallid, feeble glow,
When the bolder breezes blow,
And the spreading marsh grows dimmer;
For the clouded moon to night
Sheds abroad a misty light.

From its heathy covert leaping—
From its secret lair,
Dancing, dropping, flying, creeping,
Shooting, stopping, rising, sweeping,
Wheeling ev'rywhere,
Where the stunted bushes are,
See the fitful fen-fire go
With a blue tint like a star,

Where the sluggish waters flow,—
Flitting over the morasses,
Flaming in the taller grasses,
Gleaming weirdly as it passes
On the stream below,
While the watch-dogs howl afar,
And the cold winds blow,
Till the flick'ring stars are dying,
And the coot abroad is flying
Over marsh and stream and plain,
And the day is come again.

A BAWBEE SAVED IS A BAWBEE GAINED.

The first time I gaed ower the brig,
The tollman cam' wi' hungry gree,
Said he "Ye winna cross sae trig
Till ye hae paid me ae bawbee."

The last time I gaed ower the brig
Nae tollman cam' a bawbee cravin',
The toll-house gane, I'll sune be rich,—
Each time I cross a bawbee savin'.

CHARLES FERGUS HUNTER

WAS born in Edinburgh in 1846. Having completed his education at one of the out-door Heriot Schools, he entered the service of a bookseller. Mr Hunter looks back on the time spent in this gentleman's service with the fondest recollections. He had little work, and as his master kindly gave him access to an old circulating library—which had long ceased to circulate—much of his time was spent amongst the books. The foundation of a taste for reading was thus laid—a taste that has never forsaken him. Having spent a year or two as message boy, &c., he left the bookselling business, and served an apprenticeship to the tinsmith trade; and for the last

twenty-four years he has been employed in this calling by the North British Railway Company. He devotes much of his leisure time to the study of nearly every description of literature, and writing an occasional poem. These have appeared in the *Scotsman* and other newspapers. Having been connected with the Volunteers for over twenty-one years, he frequently writes spirited odes for the festive gatherings of his corps. All his productions exhibit a manly fervour; a healthy and elevating moral tone, as well as warm enthusiasm, and considerable lyrical power.

HE'S FAR UPON THE BRINY DEEP.

He's far upon the briny deep,
My lad wi' heart so leal,
He's bravin' dangers while I sleep,
My lad I lo'e so weel;
But oh! he's never oot my heart
Tho' far upon the main,
For frae the morn that saw us part
It's wished him back again.

When tempests rage o'er oor auld toon,
An' winter winds blaw by,
When heaven pits on its mighty froon,
An' darklin' lours the sky,
My heart shall rise through tempests wild
In prayer for him that's gane,—
Protect an' guide puir danger's child
And bring him back again.

An' gin it should be e'er his lot,
An' gin it should be mine,
To share ae humble couthie cot,
My love will never tine;
But nestling in that manly heart,
It aye had lo'ed so fain,
No winds nor waves shall ever part
My love an' me again.

THE CHILD AND THE SNOWDROP.

"Pretty snowdrop, I love flowers,
Smiling in the summer hours,
Violets blue and daisies white,
Sparkling in the morning light.

Roses red 'mid leaflets green,
Jewell'd with the dewdrop's sheen,
Fair white lilies-of-the-vale,
Sweet perfuming every gale."

"Little fairy, do not I
Get a jewel from the sky?
Through the moonbeams soft it fell,
Glittering on my silver bell."

"Yes, thou'rt pretty, that I know;
But thou bring'st frost and snow.
How can you, so wondrous fair,
Bring this cold and biting air?"

"Little fairy, thou art wrong,
To me the season's don't belong,
But He who rules the passing year
Sent me on my mission here.

Summer flowers are not dead:
He who shields my gentle head,
When I'm gone will show'r again
Their varied beauties o'er the plain.

He who made the wind so cold
Will my slender stem uphold;
Among his jewels I am one,
And His care forgetteth none.

He sends this lesson from above,
To trust in Him whose name is love;
The love which shields his snowdrop wild
Will not forget His little child."

MY CUTTY.

Soft solacer of mortal pain,
My lips shall ne'er embrace again
Thy slender stalk. Oh! cruel fate
That took thee when in primest state.
I lost thee, full, full to the throttle—
Alas, my pipe! alas, my dottle!
O'er greasy lamps or printed lore
No more thy wreathy clouds shall soar;
Thy spark is quenched, thy race is run,
No more thy whiffs shall seek the sun.
I'll sing when near the spot I turn,
"My bonny cutty's doon the burn."

C. ELPHINSTONE-DALRYMPLE,

AUTHOR of "Lays, Highland and Lowland," is the seventh son and the eleventh child of the late Sir R. H. E. Dalrymple of Logie-Elphinstone, Aberdeenshire. In his earlier years he served in the Guards. He owns the old estate of Glascoego, some seven or eight miles north of Aberdeen, together with Kinnellar Lodge, where he resides. He lives the life of a retired county gentleman, esteemed and respected as one of the most amiable and considerate men of the district. Mr Dalrymple has written several important and thoughtful papers for the "Antiquarian Society," and in 1885 he published, in a very elegant volume, his poetical productions, entitled "Lays, Highland and Lowland," composed at different times within the last forty years—(Aberdeen: John Rae Smith). The work will be universally acknowledged as an important addition to the minstrelsy of Scotland. Each ballad has attached to it valuable historical notes, showing a wide acquaintance with ancient Scottish literature. It proves that the "picturesque minstrel" is not yet dead, and that the author can reproduce the spirit of the old-time lay, blended with the flavour of the atmosphere of nineteenth-century sentiment. In a review of the work, the *Aberdeen Journal* says:—"Where the writer has the ability, we think the idea should be encouraged of handing down local traditions and legends in the ballad form. We are, therefore, glad that Mr Dalrymple has turned his attention to this species of literature, for he seems to possess to a considerable extent the spirit and power of the old 'makker.' We are glad, also, that he has given the public the benefit of his efforts. It had been a pity if the perusal of these poems had been confined to those friends whose appreciation, he says, encouraged

him to publish." The first, 'A Lay of St Magnus,' is founded upon a passage from Hector Boece, which tells of a ghostly messenger, the spirit of St Magnus, as it turned out, who announced to the people of Aberdeen the first news of the victory at Bannockburn—and that, too, on the day on which the battle was 'stricken'—ghostly messengers being the electric telegraphs of those times. The author puts the story into the mouth of a minstrel, who sings to the guests of Alexander Stewart, Lord of Mar, in 'fair Kildrummie's storied walls." As the ballads are too long for quoting more than one of them entire, our selectionis made from "Duncan Gorme"—a spirited and vigorous reproduction. The theme of "Duncan Gorme" is founded upon the following, by Sir Walter Scott:—

"Four-an'-twenty Hieland men
Cam' doun by Fiddich-side,
An' they hae sworn a solemn aith,
Jean Muir should be a bride;
An' they hae sworn a solemn aith,
Ilk ane upon his dirk,
That she should wed wi' Duncan Ger,
Or they'd mak' bluidy work."

Mr Dalrymple has put his ballad into the mouth of an Aberdeenshire minstrel, blending the dialect of that shire with the Lowland Scotch.

DUNCAN GORME.

It fell ahint the Clyack* time,
In Cushnie whar he lay,
That Duncan Gorme has turn'd him aboot
An' to his men did say,—

"The Norlan' wind is blawin' snell,
An' Cushnie hills are cauld,
It's we maun lift an unco prey,
An' syne we'll draw to hauld.

*A North-country word for the cutting of the last sheaf in harvest.

And whar is it we'll tak a prey,
An' to what hauld we'll draw
For the lang Yule nichts are nippin' cauld,
To lie amo' the snaw;

An' blin' the drifts o' Can'lemas,
Whan ower the hills they blaw?
But we'll lie cosh in bonnie Glen Tanar,
Or winter wear awa.

An' I hae harriet up an' doun,
On Don but an' on Dee,
But the bonnie lands o' Garioch
I never yet did see;
An' the plenishin' o' the Garioch carles
A gallant prey will be."

Then up an' spak' little Finlay,
A Lawland loon was he,
"There's no the like o' Gadie-side
In a' the North Countrie.

There's sheep an' nowte into the hill,
An' clever horse plentie;
There's fat corn-yards an' gangin' mills
At the back o' Benachie.

Oh Edingarroch is a bonnie place,
As it stands on Gadie-side;
An' bonnie Jeanie o' Edingarroch,
She is the Garioch's pride;

Her hair's as black as the corbie's back,
Like blaeberries her een;
For a' she's but a laird's dochter,
She weel micht be a queen."

"Gin that be true," quo' Duncan Gorme,
"That ye do tell to me,
I swear by the dirk that hings by my side
That Jeanie my bride sall be.

Gin that be true, my little Finlay,
That ye do tell to me,
The wyle o' the byres o' Edingarroch
Sall fend the winter to me.

Gin that be fause, ye Lawland loon,
That ye do tell to me,
On the heichest tree in bonnie Glen Tanar
Hie hangit ye sall be."

Little Finlay thocht intill himsell,
But ne'er a word spak he,—
"I min' hoo ye stickit Tam o' Towie,
But ye'se no get the hangin' o' me."

Little Finlay turn'd him round aboot,
An' the tear blindit his e'e;
"Ye'se no get Jeanie o' Edingarroch
Nor yet hae the hangin' o' me."

The first ae nicht but only ane
They sleepit soun' an' still;
Little Finlay has cruppen till his feet,
An' scourit ower the hill.

He scour't ower hill an' he scour't ower dale,
An' he scour't ower bank an' brae,
"Oh I maun be at Edingarroch
Afore the brak o' day!"

And whan he cam to the haughs o' Don,
That she was in spate he weel micht see,
For the merry moonlicht was shinin' bricht,
But ower the water he beet to be.

He cuist the riv'lins‡ aff his feet,
An' bent his bow an' swam;
An' whan he cam to girse growin'
Set doon his feet an' ran.

An' he has wan to Edingarroch,
Or ever the sun was in the sky,
An' Jeanie Leith an' her bower-maidens
Were furth amo' the kye.

An' whan he saw that bonnie leddy
He loutit low doon on his knee,—
"Oh welcome, welcome, young man," she said,
"An' what micht your errand be?
Oh I am Jeanie o' Edingarroch,
Come tell your errand to me."

"Oh waes me for ye, Jeanie," he said,
"It's ill news I hae to gie,
Gae cry on your fowk to raise some help,
For ye either maun fecht or flee;

For Duncan Gorme an' a' his men
Are comin' ower Coreen,

‡Brogues made out of the raw hide.

An' there'll be bare wa's in Edingarroch
Or ever the ploy be dene.*

An' Duncan's sworn a Hielan' aith,
On the dirk that hings by his side,
That he'll hae Jeanie o' Edingarroch
To be his bonnie bride."

"Noo sorra c'ower him," Jeanie she said,
"But that day he never will see,
For, tho' his dirk were at my breist-bane,
His bride Ise never be.

But waes me for you, my auld faither,
As ye sit by the fire!
Ye couldna lift ae han' nor fit
To save baith fauld an' byre.

An' wearie on ye, Willie, my brither
To be sae sune asteer;
An' gang awa wi' Putachie
To the huntin' o' the deer.

There's never a man aboot the toun,
To bring a help to me,
For, muckle an' sma, they're a' awa
To drive the dun deer to Willie.

But Annie ye maun kilt your coats
As fast as ye can dree,
An' warn the lairds o' the water-side
To ride an' rin for me;
There's Overha', an' Carden, an' bonnie Harthill,
Are kindly kin to me.

An' Mary, ye maun tak the hill,
As fast as ye can flee,
An' warn them a' at Terpersie's ha',
The laird an' his brave sons three.

An' say ye this to Harry Gordon,
The youngest o' a' the three,
That Duncan Gorme has sworn an aith
That Jeanie his bride sall be."

An' whan she cam to Terpersie's yetts,
Oh she did chap an' ca';
An' wha was it but Harry Gordon
That luikit ower the wa'?

*In the Aberdeenshire dialect, *o* and *oo* are pronounced as *e* or *ee*—thus done is dene, stone stene, floor fleer, spoon speen, blood bleed, &c.

"Oh Duncan Gorme is comin' doun,
But an' his Hielandmen,
An' there'll be bare wa's in Edingarroch
Gin ye haud na them again;

An' Duncan's sworn a Hielan' aith,
Deil sett his Hielan' pride!
That he'll hae Jeanie o' Edingarroch
To be his bonnie bride."

"An' will he sae?" quo' Harry Gordon,
"The cock craws crouse on his ain midden-heid,
But afore that he touch but her milk-white hand,
Ise be beikin' in my heart's bleed.

Rank oot, rank oot, my merry men,
An' gather on the lea!
There's a Hielan' tod aboot the fauld,
An' huntit he maun be."

Fu' fest the Gordons gather't oot,
An' rankit on the green,
An' Harry he is at their heid,
An' they're marchin' for Coreen.

An' aye we luikit up an' doun,
For fear o' their winnin' bye;
An' we thooht it lang or we spied their band,
Atween us an' the sky.

"An' wha are ye, ye Hielan' thief,
Wi' the sword but an' the spear;
D'ye come to harry the countrie-side,
That ye gang in graith o' weir?"

"My name it is Duncan Gorme," quo' he,
An' he spak heich oot wi' pride;
"An' I'm buskit in my weddin' gear,
To tak hame a Lawlan' bride.

An' for that to wed a tocherless lass
I wad think it sin an' shame,
I've brocht me a score o' pretty young men
To drive her tocher hame."

"Upo' them lads!" quo' Harry Gordon,
An' fiercely rase the fray,
But it never was seen but twa to ene
Frae Gordons could tak the day.

An' Harry has wyled oot Duncan Gorme,
Just him an' him their lene,
An' they twa swappit their swords thegither,
An' the reid bluid ran atween.

"There's ae straik for my ain true luve,
An' twa for my bonnie Jean,
An three for the life o' a rank reiver!"
An syne the fecht was dene.

An' twa to three we garr'd them flee,
An' we chas'd them even on,
An' we slew the last ene by the auld "Boar-stene,"
An' never ane wan to Don.

An' they've ta'en the heid frae Duncan Gorme,
An' set it on a speir,
An' hied them back to Edingarroch,
Ilk ane in his bluidy gear.

"Oh welcome, welcome!" quo' bonnie Jeanie,
"Thrice Welcome, Harry, to me!
But, oh, whar gat ye that gruesome heid,
An' the bluid upo' yer bree?"

"I've brocht ye a sicht o' your braw bride-groom
That sud hae been here at e'en,
Gin ye like the sett ye can hae him yet,
The lave o' him's lyin' on Coreen."

Then oot an' spak auld Edingarroch,
As he sat by the fire,
"Gin it hadna been you, young Harry Gordon,
Ise had but a weel toom byre.

Noo wyle yet oot frae aboot this toun,
The thing that sall be your meed;
Tak graith or gear, it's be yours I sweer,
Be it livin' or be it deid."

He's made but ae stride to Jeanie's side,
An' he's ta'en her by the milk-white han',
"I wadna gie ae blink o' that e'e
For Edingarroch's lan'!"

Then oot an' spak auld Edingarroch,
"Wow, man, but ye hae na fear!
For o' a' the plenishin' o' this warld,
Women's the kittlest gear!"

Gae tell the news hyne upo' Don,
An' doun on Ury's side,
That bonnie Jeanie o' Edingarroch
Is young Harry Gordon's bride.

ROBERT PARK SCOTT,

A POET whose productions have attracted the attention of Dr Charles Mackay, Thomas Faed, R.A., and other eminent Scotchmen, was born in Edinburgh at the end of the first quarter of the century. We are informed that he was prohibited by his father from reading any poetry except the Psalms, Hymns, and Graham's "Sabbath." He used to coax his mother during his father's absence to let him have the key of the bookcase, which contained Currie's "Burns," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," Scott's "Poems," and Blind Harry's "Wallace." These he studied before he was eight years of age. He entered Edinburgh High School at thirteen, and in his sixteenth year took a prize in the Rector's class for English verse. A year afterwards he gained a similar prize in Edinburgh University. His first appointment was to the situation of usher in the Grange School, Sunderland, and, "much against the grain," he had to follow the profession of a teacher in Edinburgh and elsewhere.

In 1863 he resolved to go to London, and follow a literary career. There he passed through the usual ordeal of disappointment and rebuff, living a chance sort of life, until he got into a harbour of safety—on the staff of several journals. In this capacity he has come into contact with several of our best known literary Scotchmen. The writer of a sketch of the

life of Thomas Faed, the eminent artist, in a recent part of *Good Words*, says, speaking of Mr Faed's youthful days—"Those Edinburgh days were a happy time for young Faed. . . . There he found healthy stimulus for his imagination, and in addition to learning how to paint, he learned to appreciate the manifold beauties of our great literature. With his friend R. P. Scott, a poet and a lover of poets, he spent many a pleasant hour roaming over Corstorphine Hill, or on the braes of Arthur Seat, their talk almost always on the subject of poetry." During their country walks, the artist taught our poet how to appreciate more keenly those beauties of Nature which are invisible to the ordinary gazer, such as a certain loveliness in the shape and hue of a cloud, the hang and colour of a leaf, the slope of a hill, and the twist of a branch.

In 1851 Mr Scott was on the staff of the *Edinburgh Guardian*, long since deceased. Of that staff only three are living—Professor Spencer Baynes, Sheriff Nicholson, and Mr Scott. He contributed prose as well as verse to the *Guardian*. The first poem that he had in print was "An Ode on the Death of Thomas Campbell," written a few days after the poet's death in 1844. In 1852 he brought out a volume, entitled "Octavia, and other Poems," which was dedicated by special permission to the late Lord Bulwer, and favourably received. When Mrs Beecher Stowe was welcomed to Edinburgh at a public meeting, he wrote the occasional ode, in which we find the following verse:—

> One word for Freedom uttered travels over all the earth,
> Whether spoken to the multitude or whispered at the hearth,
> Leaps on from heart to heart wherever man hath trod,
> For the golden cord of sympathy is the telegraph of God.

In addition to other poems for special occasions, in 1863, on the marriage of the Prince of Wales, he

wrote the Marriage Ode and the Song of Welcome for the great meeting in Edinburgh; in 1859 he composed and read the Burns' Centenary Ode for Liverpool; and his most recent piece in this line was for the bicentenary of the Wigton Martyrs held at Wigton. Mr Scott's productions, for the most part, are characterised by fine national sentiment and earnest purpose. They evince spontaneity of flow, while the beauties of Nature and historical subjects receive warm and attractive treatment at his hands.

"COME UNTO ME."

A puir lassie lies in a garret her lane,
Her weary feet cauld as the deid cauld heartstane;
Nocht to pillow her heid, and nae happin' at a',
And doon the dark street drive the snell blasts o' snaw.

Though her bed is the flure there's a smile on her broo,
O ne'er was the lassie sae happy as noo,
For gowans and daisies and sunlichted streams
Are bloomin' and glintin' in joy through her dreams.

Wi' her brithers and sisters she rins owre the brae,
A' gowden and white wi' the broom and the slae,
Its sang to the Summer the laverock is singin',
And saftly the leaves o' the forest are swingin'.

An angel comes doon in the eerie midnicht;
His calm kindly face fills the garret wi' licht;
He bends owre the sleeper, nae word does he speak,
But a tear frae his e'e wats the lassie's pale cheek.

Her bairnhood and hame frae her dream fade awa,
And saft on her ear hymns o' holiness fa',
And aye as she listens she hears the sweet voice
O' her mither, lang deid, cryin' "Come and rejoice!"

"Come awa to the land a' sae bonnie and fair,
Come awa whaur the weary are weary nae mair,
Whaur a sad heart ne'er sighs, nor a tear dims an e'e,—
Come awa and be happy, my bairnie, wi' me."

She dreams that her puir rags are garments o' licht,
And the garret a palace o' splendours fu' bricht;
The hymns o' the happy are soondin' mair near,
And sweeter her mither's voice fa's on her ear.

The lang hours o' nicht are noo wearin' awa,
The grey dowie mornin' creeps cauld owre the snaw,
It keeks in the garret, sae gloomy and bare,
But the angel and dreamer nae langer are there.

KADMORE.

[Caeth-na-mhor (Kadmore) a hill in Peebleshire, where a battle is said to have been fought between the tribes of Strath Clyde and Northumberland.]

Gaily the morning o'er Pentland was springing,
Sweetly the birds in the green-wood were singing,
Proudly our armour was flashing and ringing,
When we strode to the battle of Caeth-na-mhor.

Onward we went through the green-grass and heather,
Joyous in heart as the bright summer weather,
Chanting our war-song while stepping together
To meet with the Saxon on Caeth-na-mhor.

High in the heavens the sun was ascending,
Eastward and southward the white clouds were trending,
When slogan and war-cry, like twin thunders blending,
Awoke the wild echoes of Caeth-na-mhor.

O'er Tinto the sun, wan and weary, was going,
His last yellow gleam on the mountain-side throwing;—
Still the tide of the battle was ebbing and flowing,
And its crimson waves broke upon Caeth-na-mhor.

Down the vale of the Mannor the big moon was beaming,
Shield, buckler, and sword in its silver light gleaming;—
Still the torrent of slaughter was bubbling and streaming
Through the broom and the bracken on Caeth-na-mhor.

When the stars of the twilight were glittering o'er us
We drove the last band of the Saxon before us,
We sang our proud anthem of triumph in chorus,
For we won the great battle of Caeth-na-mhor,

But we bore a dead chief from the corrie of slaughter
Where the blood of our best had been poured out like water,
And loud was the wailing of mother and daughter
For the warriors that came not from Caeth-na-mhor.

Brightly o'er Pentland the morning was breaking,
The birds in the green-wood sweet music were making,
Beneath our glad tread moss and moorland were shaking
When we went to the battle of Caeth-na-mhor.

Darkly o'er Pentland the midnight was lying,
Loud in the black wood the screech-owl was crying,
And slowly we trod with the dead and the dying
When we came from the battle of Caeth-na-mhor.

JEANIE.

The wind is on the western bay,
The gloamin' darkens frae the grey ;
Gin mornin' I'll be far away
Frae a' that's dear to me, Jeanie.
I leave my native Scotland's hills,
Its grassy shaws and wimplin' rills,
Without ae pang—the tear that fills
My e'e is but for thee, Jeanie.

There's monie, monie that I ken
Will miss me, aiblins, noo and then ;
But nane on me their thochts will spen'
For lang lang years, like thee, Jeanie.
I've met wi' beauty's lowin' smile,
I've aften felt its witchin' guile,
But nane but thee could ever wile
The mournful thochts frae me, Jeanie.

The hawthorn, in its snawy pride,
Will wave aboon the burnie's tide,
Amang the wild flowers by its side,
I'll roam nae mair wi' thee, Jeanie.
The summer winds ilk year will blaw
The hawthorn's bloom like drifted snaw :
The rain and sunshine aften fa'
Upon oor trystin' tree, Jeanie.

'Neath it we never mair will meet,
In summer's shine or winter's weet ;
Some day our lives will be complete
Whaur pairtin' canna be, Jeanie.
The stars are blinkin' owre the hill,
The wind is waxin' drear and chill,
Mair cauld and drear the thochts that fill
My heart at leavin' thee, Jeanie.

POET'S CORNER, WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

March 7, 1885.

Dan Geoffrey Chaucer, Father of our Song,
Came forth from 'mid the monumental urns,
And stepping stately through the tuneful throng,
Held forth his hand to welcome Robert Burns.

'Twixt Chaucer at the Surrey "Tabard Inn,"
And Robin at the "Globe" in auld Dumfries,
Five hundred years! but poetry can kin
Long parted ages spite of time's increase.

Chancel and aisle were silent while they spoke—
The red life rushed into the statued stones—
The slumbering great ones of the past awoke
To listen to the music of their tones.

What spake they of? The merry pilgrimage
Across the bloomy wealds and wolds of Kent?
The gruesome orgie of a later age
In Alloway Kirk, when wit with weirdness blent?

Shakespeare smiled down upon them as they past,
And rare Old Ben and Spencer held their breath;
Milton to heaven his sightless eyes upcast,
While listening to the words that conquer death.

And when they came within the sacred nook,
The singers that for ages had been dumb
Cried with one mighty voice that rose and shook
Pillar and roof,—"The Ploughman Bard has come!"

"Right welcome art thou to this hallowed pile!
Be thou our guest for ever, and a day!"
And while the cry re-echoed down the aisle
The shadowy throng, to silence, passed away.

JOSEPH MORISON

JS one of the many who strive to "make the happy fireside chime to weans and wife," and to sweeten the drudgery of personal toil, by occasional liltings on the Doric lyre. He was born near Londonderry, Ireland, in 1838, but is of Scottish parentage, his father being a native of Stirlingshire. Mr Morison is employed as a joiner in the Caledonian Engine Works, Glasgow. He received little scholastic education, but, endowed with strong natural intelligence, a clear head,

and an ardent desire for books, he is recognised by his fellows as superior to the general tenor of the mass in which he moves. Like Allan Ramsay, he is "mair to mirth than grief inclined." He is fond of a twa-handed crack with an intelligent neighbour: and shows in these conversations that he has a considerable amount of originality, and no small share of general information. His rhymes are the outcome of passing incidents and fancies. In an address to his father's staff he says—

'Tis neither beauty, worth, nor show,
For which we some things prize;
There's father's staff—a wood grown sloe,
That most men might despise.

Yet it brings back bright scenes to me:
I hear my father's laugh,
When I preferred to every knee
A ride upon his staff.

And how he watched with fond delight
While with it I did play,
And said, "That's Joey's horse at night,
And mine throughout the day."

And I have seen it in his hand,
The trusty friend remain,
While I have grown from child to man,
And he to child again.

The subject of the following verse is happily not a universal application. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the counterparts of the picture are not uncommon in real life. A story is told of a little boy who said "that his stepmother saw better wi' ae e'e than his ain mither did wi' twa." He spoke the experience of more than himself.

THE STEPMITHER'S BREATH.

Come here, my wee mannie, and tell's whaur you've been,
Since faither's late marriage it's seldom you're seen;
I'm rale wae to see that the bloom's left your cheeks,
An' that your wee leg's shinin' oot through your breeks;

Your heid is as rough as it ne'er saw a caimb—
The death o' the mither soon alters the hame!
You're no like her laddie, you're mair like a wraith;
It's a cauld, witherin' blast a stepmither's breath.

No lang syne, my man, you were cheery and bright,
When mither's chief care was to mak' you a' right,
An' 'mang father's cracks you were aye his chief boast,
Sin' first you could seek a wee bit o' his toast;
An' for your wee horse how he made a wee cairt,
An' hurled you himsel', 'twas a perfect divert;
What's come ower him noo? if he loved you sae weel?
Can a stepmither's breath turn a heart into steel?

Puir mannie, you're starved, while she's kind to her ain,
An' faither's sae harsh noo, you daurna complain,
An' their plump rosy cheeks he might weel discern,
While you are reduced to a shilpit wee bairn;
Nae winder fond mithers, when partin' earth's ties,
Are often heard pleadin' wi' deep groans an' sighs,
That He wha alane can protect them frae scaith
Would shield their wee lambs frae a stepmither's breath.

For the lair is aye hard an' gey often bare,
O' the bairns that are left to a stepmother's care;
An' whatever is wrang, puir things, they're to blame,
An' often they gang wi' a cauld hungry wame;
I whiles think, instead o' their mithers bein' taen,
The loss had been less if their faithers had gane—
They couldna be waur wi' the loss o' them baith,
As then they'd been free frae a stepmither's breath.

THE TOBACCO BOX.

While bards of merit sing in praise of what most men admire,
Let me now choose a subject meek while musing by the fire;
A trifling thing the haughty man would never stoop to lift,
And yet a thing that's dear to me, because a father's gift.
To me fond memories of the past within it still are hid,
For which the stranger long might look in vain beneath its lid;
'Tis not like family names of peers, nor yet their herds and flocks,
But what my father used for years— his old tobacco box.

It leads me back in fancy yet to that old cottage dear,
Where round the hearth the friends I loved in youthful days appear,
When I knew nought of wordly strife, nor sin, nor toil, nor care;
Again I'm clutching father's knee, or swinging round his chair,
Till he would give the same old box unto his prattling boy,
For which I would have parted then my best and choicest toy;

And when in storms of life I see the rugged, threatening rocks,
My yearning heart returns to where I first saw that old box.

But while upon the sea of life from place to place we roam,
'Tis but in fancy or in dreams we see the dear old home,
And since the joyous days of youth can never more return,
And friends we loved are snatched away, and we are left to mourn,
We slowly top the hill of life, but rapidly descend,
And thus with me the measured time is drawing near an end;
I feel, while looking at the grey that's mingling with my locks,
I soon must leave to other hands my old tobacco box.

FRANCIS DRAPER,

AUTHOR of a volume of poems, entitled "The Escape from Lochleven," and other productions, was born in London in 1832, and at a very early age expressed his thoughts in rhyme. Of a sensitive, thoughtful, and meditative cast of mind, the return of Spring always seemed to bring with it to him a peculiar feeling of mingled joy and sadness —an indescribable fulness of joy which in its very exuberance seemed to lead to a reaction of deep and quiet thoughtfulness. In 1845 he was apprenticed to a carver and gilder who held an appointment in the National Gallery, and as his master was employed by numerous persons of eminence, this brought the lad into the homes of many of the best known statesmen and public men of the day, as well as those connected with art and literature. This insight he made use of in after years in a series of graphic papers sketching the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Brougham, the Duke of Cambridge, Kossuth, Garibaldi, Cruickshank, Gladstone, and others. Amongst his recollections is that of Samuel Rogers, the poet, whom he saw

in his own house, in a room of which there hung on the wall one of the only three one million pound notes said to have been struck.

At intervals during his apprenticeship, Mr Draper indulged his literary tastes—sometimes in songs, letters, and sketches to various newspapers and magazines. Amongst these might be noted a very able series of articles, entitled "Men I Have Seen." About this time John Cassell was publishing his "Working Man's Friend," in which the work of Janet Hamilton and other Scottish poets first saw the light. In this publication appeared his paper, entitled "The Power of Opinion," for which he received a prize. He also wrote a song for the "Crystal Fount," one of the best known and most popular selections of temperance songs. On completing his apprenticeship, he paid a visit to Edinburgh, where he enjoyed the friendship of the late Thomas Knox, whose career is sketched in this volume. He also visited Lochleven, the beauties and associations of which he, after repeated visits, describes with graphic power in his lengthy poem, entitled "The Escape from Lochleven," published in 1879. This poem was well received, and the Queen was pleased to acknowledge receipt of a copy, and, as showing the interest Her Majesty took in the subject, shortly afterwards, on her journey to Balmoral, she caused the train to be stopped on the margin of the Loch, so that she might take a look of the castle and its surroundings.

Mr Draper has taken an active part in many good movements, and is connected with most of the societies which have for their object the benefit of mankind. The temperance cause, especially among the young, has claimed a full share of his attention. This is seen in much of his literary work, which has been to him a pleasing recreation amid the the cares and anxieties of business. In all his productions, both in prose and verse, we find beauty and tenderness combined with

pleasing imagery, a strong religious feeling, and the warm breathings of human love. There is in his poetry, moreover, an apparent absence of effort, as if the author's thoughts naturally adapted themselves to poetic expression. Our first extract is from "The Escape from Lochleven."

Queen of two kingdoms, would ambition more !
Three times a wife, and suitors full a score :
Beauty unrivalled and attractive gait,
While every charm upon her seemed to wait ;
A power of mind and speech whose right employ
Might prove an endless source of purest joy.
Sinning and sinned against as ne'er a one,
The guilt was hers, and yet not hers alone.
How hard to judge, when passion everywhere,
And party feeling fills the atmosphere ;
When time clears off the vapours, then we see
In after years what once was mystery ;
And few who tell us of Queen Mary's fate,
The undoubted facts in the same way relate.
Go down to Kensington, her portraits view—
One paints her with brown eyes and one with blue,
And they who in her time the truth might know,
The credit of such knowledge would forego ;
Eager some selfish purpose to pursue,
They scarce believed the truth, which yet they knew.
The truth was mystified, or half revealed,
And fancy pictured, what was left concealed ;
Flattered by many a one for his own end,
'Twas hard to know who really was her friend ;
Who hid behind the mask, she seldom knew,
So oft betrayed by those she counted true ;
The very men on whom she placed her choice,
Would praise and blame her with the self same voice.
Suspicion ruled within and honied guile,
Were met by counterplot and crafty wile :
No well marked line she chose, or course maintained,
But yielded to those powers which unrestrained,
Oft revelled in her bosom at their will,
And led her far from joy and further still :
The true men round her ever sought the right,
But vainly midst the darkness groped for light.
Baffled in each attempt they strove in vain
To bring the discord into peace again ;
Uncertainty and vagueness dwelt around,
Nor hope, nor joy could anywhere be found.

. . . . . .

How wondrous is this life,
Crowded with love, with envy, joy, and strife,
What wide expanding hopes fill every heart,
What thoughts and feelings in it take a part,
Have there their birth, and ever still abide,
Living, unknown to all the world beside.
Then dying when we die, no record tell,
Of all the joy or pain we know so well;
Unread by all but Him who all things knows,
To whom all secrets nature must disclose,
Who hears the softest whispers that we raise,
In supplication or in songs of praise.

THE OLD COTTAGE.

. . . . Oh let it be.
For time deals with it tenderly
Link of the past, of people gone,
All tenantless, though still a home—
No home to some long passed away,
Yet still a home to those who stay,
And sojourn here beneath the shade,
Which twining clustering leaves hath made.

Beneath that old, that red-tiled roof
Was heard the merry shout of youth,
There hath the weary gone to rest,
Laid by the troubles of the breast.
Faces calmed down in sweet repose,
Hath gently felt the eye-lid close
Once radiant with the joy they seek
Ere pallid grew the ruddy cheek.

And some whose kindred too I claim,
Who bear (to me) a well known name,
Have lived and died within its walls,
Which still the fond remembrance calls,
Have passed away to realms above
And only left a name to love,
Yet why a name? because around
A loving memory still is found.

For there are found in calm repose
They who in this old cottage rose
Oft in the early dawn to toil;
Or greet their children's welcome smile.
Whose feet the very stone hath worn
With passing through at night and morn,
Who through the lattice oft have gazed,
Whose hand the latch hath often raised.

There cling to the bouldered wall
The pears would from the pear tree fall,
The well and bucket in the rear
Such trifles still to memory dear.
These make the fond remembrance say
And wish such scenes might last for aye,
That this old cottage still might stand
Till razed by Time's indulgent hand.

JEANIE'S "NAY" TO JOCK.

I canna leave my faither, Jock,
Nay, lad—noo say nae mair;
There's mony ither lasses, Jock,
As winsome and as fair,
Wad gie fu' mony a siller crown
Your bonnie bride to be;
Gae, Jock, and choose one for your ain,
And dinna wait for me.

Lang syne, when in the cauldriff earth
He laid my mither doon,
He spak nae word, nor drap't a tear,
As we cam' thro' the toon;
But when within the ingle nook
So wearyfu' he sat,
His very heart seemed like to break,
So waefully he grat.

And looked on ilka thing around
Wi' sad and wistfu' gaze,
Such anguish wrinkled on his brow,
I thought his head would craze;
And then he stroked my gowden head,
Ca'd me his bonnie bairn—
And roused to energy again,
To keep us baith frae harm.

For little Jamie, but a wean,
Nae mither's love could know,
A wee frail floweret on the muir
Where winter's blasts would blow;
A faither's and a mither's love
Were mingled into ane,
So tenderly he laid him doon,
And ca'd him his wee lamb.

But sud my faither be ca'd hame,
And lang, lang may it be,
And I could call myself my ain,
And you sud still be free,

Then I would gie thee a' mysel,
As now I do my heart,
And all the wealth the Indies hold
We twa sud never part.

I'll brak this saxpence, Jock, in twa,
And gie the half to thee, ;
But sud you wed some leddy braw,
Then gie it back to me,
For I wadnae stand in your way,
But aye forgotten be ;
Then gang yer gate, as weel ye may,
And dinna fash for me.

THE DRUNKARD.

Do you think when you drink
Of the ills that flow,
And entwine round ruby wine
Wheresoever you go?
Chorus—Oh ! brother, come, brother,
Listen unto me,
And tales untold
Could I unfold
Of human misery.

Love is dead, peace has fled,
All joys depart ;
Hate and crime around entwine,
And mischief fills his heart.
Oh ! brother, etc.

Black despair, ruin there,
Follow in the train ;
Thoughts of past awake at last,
And rack the burning brain.
Oh ! brother, etc.

There the slave, see him crave,
Ever, ever dry,
Drink again, 'tis all in vain—
All in vain to try.
Oh ! brother, etc.

Hear him laugh, see him quaff
From the poisoned bowl.
Vacant stare, needless fear
Ever fills his soul.
Oh ! brother, etc.

Life he spends, life he ends,
Then he hears death's call;
Doubt and fear and dark despair
Let the curtain fall.
Oh! brother, etc.

Cast away, never play
With the serpent more.
God hath said, "Thy daily bread
And water shall be sure."
Oh! brother, etc.

WILLIE.

With all the children gathered round,
With one melodious joyful sound,
The circle seems complete to *thee*,
The music perfect seems to be.
But yet, one voice I miss,
And a sweet face, 'tis his—
My missing lamb,
My missing lamb.

How merry is the laugh I hear,
No want of joyfulness is there;
No want to thee who knowest not all,
Nor that soft voice that once would call—
Me father, with a face of joy,
'Tis his, my darling, Willie, boy;
My missing lamb,
My missing lamb.

One roguish eye, one winsome smile,
Whose memory chains my heart awhile;
Active with life and full of fun,
As gladsome as the noonday sun;
Whose voice still echoes in my heart,
My Willie called from me to part,
My missing lamb,
My missing lamb.

The fold will never be complete,
The circle perfect till we meet.
Ever I see the vacant place,
Ever I look to see his face.
In the warm covert of my breast
I let his precious memory rest—
My missing lamb,
My missing lamb.

Ah! he my lamb was taken home,
The master Shepherd bid him come.
Safe from the world's harsh winds and cold,
He took him to the other fold.
Beneath His tender care,
He waits to meet me there—
My missing lamb,
My missing lamb.

J. C. MASSIE

AS a young poet of warm and tender feeling, and of excellent promise when we take into consideration his meagre opportunities and the humble sphere he occupies. He was born in Forfar in 1868, and began to court the Muses before he was twelve years of age. His parents were only able to send him to school, irregularly, for about five years. His teacher was the recently deceased "Vinney"—Mr James Smith, one of our poets. At a tender age Massie went to work in a factory, amid the din and bustle of which he has composed numerous excellent verses that have appeared in the local and other newspapers under the *noms-de-plume* of "Adonias," "A Factory Boy," &c. We are informed that the textile industry having been in a languishing state for some years, and the necessarily low wages curtailing his purchasing power, he is given to taking an occasional stroll around the booksellers' windows, and has thus been able in some measure to satisfy the cravings of his intellectual appetite. His literary efforts and thirst for knowledge shows resolute facing of hardships, self-denial, and unremitting ardour, and self-culture.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

There is a language wild and sweet,
Which only lovers know ;
Where every thought finds utterance meet,
And every wish can glow.
Tongue ne'er could lisp its million words,
Nor smiles, nor tears, nor sighs ;
It scorns the rules of pedant fools ;
'Tis—the language of the eyes.

There is one spot on earth, whose light
Dispels the gloom of life ;
Where happiness and love unite
To banish care and strife.
The grandest scene the wanderer views
Wherever he may roam
Has not the grace of this one place,
That spot,—that spot is home.

There is one shrine on earth where all
Our joys and sorrows blend,
Where all our finer feelings fall,
Where purest thoughts attend.
One smile amid a world of frowns,
One spot where sorrows rend,
Where Love's sweet strains court slumber's chains—
The bosom of a friend.

There are three elemental fires,
Which should inspire each soul ;
One is the nurse of pure desires,
One scorns the name—control.
One burns to expose the shams and ills
That spring in wisdom's youth,
To wreck the frauds that custom lauds,
They're Virtue, Freedom, Truth !

There is a dismal path and drear
Whose gloomy windings lead
Through the wild haunts of pain and fear
Through sorrow's sunless mead.
Through disappointment's gloomy shades,
Amid the realms of strife,
To where there stands, with bloodless hands,
Cold Death ; that path is—Life.

SLEEP.

Sweet sleep ! soft as the rippling breeze of morn,
Thou art a charm to all. When ceaseless pains
Torment the wearied wretch, and tuneless strains
Jar on his languid ear ; when Hope, from Fancy born,

In air dissolves, and crowding thoughts oppress the mind ;
When Despair conjures a fate that laughs e'en Hell to scorn ;
When Hope, before Truth's light, fades as the stars at morn,
Mocking the wistful eye, till horrors e'en seem kind ;—
How sweet 'tis then to have our suffering form
Fann'd by thy soft wings, and 'mid Life's raging storm
To lie at peace. Methinks thou art the sweetest gift
That Nature has to man presented. For all
That wars against this mortal frame, like phantoms fall
Before thy influence sweet, and leaves the soul n peace to drift.

SORROW—PLEASURE.

Chill Winter winds that whistle wild,
Blow, blow ; ye are in league with Death ;
For hushed ye not the living breath
Of her who only loved and smiled?

Ye've robbed the woods of song and leaf ;
And you, ye heartless ghosts of woe—
I held her to my breast, and lo !
Ye spoke, and changed my joy to grief :

False winds, ye plucked my thornless flower,
And stilled the tongue unwed to guile,
Ye paled the lips born but to smile,
And dimmed the eye whose mystic power

Found centre in the hearts of all.
But blow, ye can but nurse my grief
(And Sorrow is the sweeter thief)
For Pleasure lives but for to fall.

And sadness is more sweet than joy,
And tears than all your shallow mirth ;
For Sorrow is of noble birth,
And Pleasure but a gilded toy—

A ghost that madly sweeps the strings,
That tremble to a lighter touch,
But cannot make the music, such
As gives to thought an eagle's wings.

FAREWELL.

Farewell ! Farewell ! But ere we part
Let memory strike these mystic strings
Whose subtle music softly flings
A pleasure o'er the mind and heart.

We met—and loved. (I scarcely know
If I should bless or curse that hour.)
We loved—and swore no earthly power
Could ever part us here below.

How oft beneath yon spreading oak
We've sat, nor thought, nor fancy ere
Could fathom half the bliss that there
We felt. There oft our spirits spoke

Their silent whisp'rings through our eyes;
There oft we listened to the evening song
Of Nature; and there the fleecy throng
Of clouds we've watched, wing the blue skies

To pillow in the golden west
Their languid forms and every scene
Awoke within my inmost being
Those finer thoughts that warm the breast.

The brightest day must die. Those hours,
By pleasure kissed, are dead and gone,
And we yet live. But I alone,
Alone, and in a world whose flowers,

Whose mountains, and whose azure skies
Can charm no more. Go, faithless fair,
My soul rebels that ere't did share
One hour of bliss with thy false eyes.

Yet I'll not curse thee. Go, and live
With him whose shallow fancies, and
Soft whispered vows have won thy hand,
Perhaps thy heart! Go! go! I can forgive.

Then Fare-thee-well. I will not weep
To part with one so false. I go
(May Heaven forgive thee here below)
To seek that world beyond the deep.

And should thy future prove a Hell
Of sorrows, grief, and pain, and fears,
Remember him thy falsehood's spears
Did bleed, and weep. Farewell! Farewell!

FRAGMENTS.

O could we give each subtle thought
The cloak of words, the wings of speech—
What pregnant sermons might we preach,
What golden volumes might be wrote.

O golden hours far in the past,
When every pregnant hour gave birth
To song and smile, and lighter mirth—
I weep to let my memory cast

Her gaze among thy crumbled towers,
For every glance recalls the truth—
How fleeting are the things of youth,
How quickly die the sweetest flowers.

I love not words that strike to birth,
A veil to hide the depths of Hell;
O for the truth, the naked truth,
Though death in every limb should dwell.

O who would nurse a joy that's born
Of empty words and hungry Hope?
Not I—let sorrow have her scope—
Though every hour should plant the thorn.

JAMES GREIG.

THERE are not many towns in Scotland that can furnish such a pleasing group of poetical talent as Arbroath. Not a few of her poets have already found a place in these pages. The subject of the present sketch is a native of that town, and was born within sight of "the Round O," in 1861. At the age of four he was sent to a "dame's school," where he learned his "A B C," and to this he added the knitting of garters and stockings, accomplishments not to be despised, as, when so employed, he was unconsciously being trained to habits of patient industry. His next school was that of the "Abbey," not the present large Board School of that name, but one of much humbler pretensions. Here he added to his skill in knitting a slender knowledge of the three R's. Geography and grammar were "professed" but not practised. So seldom were these branches taught that the pupils

generally forgot the one lesson by the time the next one was attempted. The little learning that was to be got, however, was made good use of, and not a few prizes in one or other of the R's were the reward of his diligence. On leaving school he was apprenticed to the flaxdressing trade, and not being possessed of a robust constitution his health has suffered from the nature of his work. It was while serving his apprenticeship that he first attempted verse-making. One beautiful autumn afternoon he spied a robin perched on a paling. The tiny warbler was lilting a cheery song. But the very cheeriness of the little songster served only to make the listener feel sad as he thought of the dreary days which were in store for the wee robin redbreast, when the winter winds would come soughing through the woods, and the earth would don her mantle of snow. When he reached home he attempted to put his thoughts in verse. Next morning he showed the result to a shopmate, who, on reading it, exclaimed—"Man, Jim, you're a poet!" Of this compliment our poet felt not a little proud, and it encouraged him to send the lines to the *Dundee Weekly News*. They were duly inserted, and since then he has continued to cultivate his poetical talent, contributing verses to various periodicals. To the sister art of painting he also, like many of our minor poets, devotes a part of his leisure, and he has had his pictures hung in the Dundee and other exhibitions.

Partly owing to indifferent health, and partly from the stagnation in business, Greig has had to fight a stiff battle with poverty, but over against this he finds a considerable solace in his efforts with his pencil and his pen. More than once he has had to leave his native place in search of work, and he is presently employed in Dundee. He is a chaste, thoughtful, and melodious writer of verse. His sonnets possess a a quiet, meditative pathos, while his songs have the musical ring of true poetry, and everything that he

has submitted for our consideration is impressive as it is simple and natural in construction.

FATHER, THY WILL BE DONE.

I soon will leave you noo mither,
An' a' this weary pain ;
But dinna greet for me, mither,
In heaven we'll meet again.
I thocht it hard at first, mither,
To leave you here alane ;
But God will care for you, mither,
When I am deid and gane.

I used to gang to Foulis, mither,
To pu' the bonnie flowers ;
But bonnier flowers I'll pu', mither,
In Eden's shady bowers.
I used to hear wi' joy, mither,
The laverock sweetly sing :
But sweeter music mak's, mither,
The walls o' heaven ring.

I'll meet my father there, mither,
An' dark-e'ed sister Kate,
An' we shall wait for you, mither,
Beside the gowden gate.
Wee Kate an' I shall weave, mither,
A croon o' flowers for you,
An' father dear will place, mither,
The croon upon your broo.

So dinna greet for me, mither ;
Oh, dinna greet for me !
For tho' we're partin' noo, mither,
It's only for a wee.
But I maun speak nae mair, mither,
But I maun speak nae mair ;
For oh ! my lips are dry, mither,
An' oh ! my briest is sair.

The little sufferer closed her eyes,
An' grasped her mother's hand,
An' quietly passed her pure young soul
Into the better land.
The mother looked upon her child,
Whose race on earth was run,
And from her lips escaped the words—
"Father, Thy will be done."

BLIND.

I feel the sunshine warm upon my face,
I hear the zephyrs whisper in my ear,
I hear the feathered warblers piping clear,
As o'er this country road I slowly pace ;
I feel the fragrance of the flowers that grace
The winding waysides and the woodlands near ;
I hear the boys and girls loudly cheer
As they across the fields each other chase.
But oh ! I cannot see their sparkling eyes,
Nor can I see the sunbeams gild their hair ;
The flowers that fill the ambient air
With fragrance sweet, the brilliant azure skies,
The lark, the birds that flit from tree to tree,
It ne'er hath been my happy lot to see.

FAME.

Dear to the youthful poet's heart is fame ;
Entranced he searches in the realm of thought
For peerless gems in soil as yet unwrought,
All for the empty honour of a name.
The critic's praise, the applauding world's acclaim
Are dearer, sweeter far to him than aught
On earth. But, ah ! his fame is dearly bought ;
His unstrung nerves decay ; his once strong frame
Is shattered with the strain of toilful days
And sleepless nights. No time has he to make
A friendship with one heart for friendship's sake—
All, all he yearns for is worldy praise ;
And then, in after years, he wanders sad, alone,
His sycophantic friends departed—gone—all gone.

O, MIGHTY SEA.

O, mighty Sea ! the rising King of Day
Is quickly driving off the glooms of night
From thy great breast. Bright, dazzling beams of light
Shoot up and tinge the lingering clouds of grey
With gold and rosy red. Still on his way
King Sol in glory speeds, and still more bright
The sky becomes ; and now upon my sight
Sol bursts in splendour and majestic sway.
To see thee now—so fair, and seemingly at peace—
No one would ever think that in thy breast
Grim shadows dwell that ever break thy rest
With woeful moans like those that never cease
To haunt the callous-hearted murd'rer's mind,
Until on earth sweet peace he cannot find.

I'VE COME AGAIN.

I've come again, my Mary dear, from o'er the dark blue sea,
To keep the promise that I made, my heart's first love, to thee,
When here we met, so sad at heart, three years ago to-day,
To take a kiss and say farewell before I went away.

When seated round the big camp fire, upon yon foreign strand,
I heard the bearded miners sing their songs of fatherland;
My mem'ry wander'd to this spot, and I in fancy strolled
With thee, and in thy willing ears sweet tales of love I told.

When fortune seemed to turn from me, and hope give way to fear,
An angel voice would come and breathe thy name, my Mary dear;
And up I got and started work, determined to succeed,
And now I've got more money, love, than ever I shall need.

And when temptation held me fast, my mind aye turned to thee,
And to my heart came strength anew; I struggled and got free.
Yes, Mary dear, thy mem'ry was to me a guiding star
That kept me in the paths of right when in the West afar.

And I've come back, my Mary dear, from o'er the dark blue sea,
To keep the promise that I made, my heart's first love to thee;
And ere another month goes by thou'lt be a happy bride,
And when we're wed no power on earth shall ever us divide.

THOMAS EDWARDS

WAS born in 1857 at Milnab, near Crieff, where his father was miller for a long period of years. Nursed amid scenery of much beauty, he passed his early years in roaming among the woods and braes and "guddlin' for troots" in the Turret, a stream that takes its rise in Glenturret, and joins the Earn in sight of his boyhood's home. The birds were his favourite companions in those halcyon days. He could tell the name of any of them from their flight,

and knew the feints and vagaries of them all, from a crow to a tomtit. The fine scenery that surrounds his native town doubtless laid the foundation for that love of Nature he has so sweetly embodied in verse.

Our poet left school in his fifteenth year, and was then sent to learn the house-painting business, which he has followed out in all its branches. Finishing his apprenticeship, he went to Edinburgh for a season or two, and then returned to Crieff, where he has worked and rhymed ever since. He has been a profound reader from his youth, and all his leisure hours are spent in the company of his favourite authors in his own pleasant little kingdom by the hearth. At a very early age he "lisped in numbers," although his juvenile rhapsodies were mostly committed to the flames. For several years Mr Edwards has been a much esteemed contributor to the *Glasgow Herald*, the *People's Friend*, the *People's Journal*, and the *Weekly News*, as well as the local press, in the columns of which he is widely and favourably known under the cognomen of "Ned Thomas." There is much melody as well as tender feeling in many of his lyrics, and these are such as would evidently lend themselves readily to musical accompaniment. All his poems evince a reverent and intelligent preception of the charms of Nature, and show the thoughtful and reflective spirit.

SONG.

Noo gloamin' sweet wi' noiseless feet
Steals slow o'er fell an' fountain,
An' hides the scars that Nature's wars
Hae left upon the mountain ;
An' roond the mune the stars abune
Blink bonnie in the burnie,
That scuds alang wi' lauch an' sang,
Ne'er tirin' o' its journey.

The airy swift has left the lift,
Whaur late he wheeled fu' cheerie,

Noo 'neath the eaves love's tale he weaves,
An' crosles near his dearie,
The witchin' spell that wraps the dell
Begotten o' the gloamin',
Is dear to me, for then to thee
My truant heart is roamin'.

Ken ye the place whaur timid love
Mak's bold to end his sighin',
An' taste the bliss o' beauty's kiss
Wi' nane but nature spyin'?
There braggart fame is but a dream
That scarcely stirs the fancy,
But love is a' at gloamin's fa',
In that sweet grove wi' Nancy.

SONG OF THE HEARTH.

How fearfully sounds the storm to-night
As it bellows and breaks amid the plain,
Hissing and howling in wild affright,
And spitting in wrath on the window pane;
But little I care for the tempest fierce,
As it hurtles athwart heaven's darkened dome.
It ne'er can the calm of my spirit pierce,
For I'm safely moored in my harbour home.
Then ho for the cheeriest spot on earth!
Where love sings sweetest and care takes wing,
Where elysian joys have a nightly birth,
And the flower of hope's ever blossoming.

I'm king of a realm where lurks no foe,
Where the bane of distrust ne'er a refuge knew,
For I bear in my heart where'er I go
The love of my subjects leal and true.
No fiery faction's venomous creed,
With its alien breath spreads contagion round,
But the soul of union finds its meed
In the sunny smiles with laughter crowned.
Then ho for the merriest spot on earth, &c.

With legs astraddle on fire-lit hearth
I smoke my pipe at my kingly will,
While I plunge in the soul-refreshing mirth
That's born of a draught of the Muse's rill.
O its more than the lords of creation know,
The lofty joys of a lowly cot;
The gems in the crown of love that glow
Can never with tinsel show be bought.
Then ho for the happiest spot on earth! &c.

OOR WEE STURDY MAY.

Let poets rant in English gab their fancy rhymin' gear,
As if they read the classic bards ilk day in a' the year;
But I will lilt as weel's I can a humble Doric lay
Aboot the hairum-scairum pranks o' oor wee sturdy May.

When March's bitin' wind gaed thro' the trees wi' eerie bum,
An' tried to force the winnock in, an' thundered doon the lum,
An' frichtened a' the women folk, an' reddened every snoot,
Was born the wean wha mak's us a' stand to the richt aboot.

The pastor ca'd her Mary, but she cut the maitter short;
The r's a bugbear to the bairn, an she saw nae use for't;
Noo in the hoose or oot the hoose, or rantin' at her play
She's only kent to neepor folk as oor wee sturdy May.

She's up afore the screech o' day an' pu'in' at my beard,
An' lat it be as dark as pick the fient a bit she's fear'd;
"It time fo' daddie gaun to wirk fo' peeshies—daddie 'ise,"
An' if I don't get up at aince she deaves us wi' her cries.

An' noo she's got a "pompidoo," the pattern o' my sark,
Whilk sairs in turn a pinafore an' dishcloot at her wark;
She can the servant imitate, an' weel the lady play,
There's makin's o' an actress guid in oor wee sturdy May.

Ilk dish her dumpy fingers grip dees o' a broken hert,
An' when I flyte she sabs an' greets, an' acts the sorry pairt,
Syne in an an instant aff she goes the gayest o' the gay—
They're thin partitions 'tween the moods o' oor wee sturdy May.

Yet tho' she mak's me aften wild when I'm on study bent,
A streak o' kindness rins thro' a' her thro'-gaun merriment;
She ronnies on "I'm mammie's pet an' daddie's da'lin' doo,"
An' as I write I hear her rattlin' at it i' the noo.

Lang may ye keep, my bonnie bairn, your cheeks o' rosy red,
Your form sae fair an plumpy, an' your gowden curly head;
An' when ye reach to womanhood, if e'er ye see the day,
May common sense an' prudence guide my ain wee sturdy May.

FAITH.

What is it? Heaven's refulgent gift,
To cheer life's weary span,
A bulwark when temptation's floods
Sweep o'er the path of man;
No power can quench its sacred flame,
Its influence never dies,
But animates and gives the soul
Its passport to the skies.

'Tis not alone with innocence
It loves to make its stay,
But enters through the gates of vice
Where crime doth hold the sway.
Even yonder convict in his cell,
Surrounded by his chains,
Has dropt the manacles of sin,
And trust in God remains.

Life's feeble fabric scarce can hold
Its own before the blast,
If not supported by that prop
Whose strength shall ever last.
Then, brethren, let your groundwork be
Faith, steady, calm, and pure;
It may but match the mustard seed,
Yet you will live secure.

ODE TO A THRUSH.

Hail, mottled songster, pioneer of spring,
Thy pristine notes spread rapture through my soul;
I list thy vocal utterings, and fling
My waking thoughts aside, and grasp the whole
Ethereal joyance influenced by thee,—
For thou dost dream of summers's melting bliss,
Though all around thy couch be bleak and bare,
And naked every tree,
Yet, piping prophet of the numberless,
Green Nature travails round thee everywhere.

I see from where I stand thy rounded form,
A tiny spec against the skyline clear,
Swayed by the "viewless minstrels" of the storm
That bears thy song full-throated to my ear;
And as I list thee, boyhood's passion breaks
Athwart my mature manhood passionless,
Revolving in my memory the joys
Of youth when love awakes,
Tasting again the spring of happiness
Which life's habitual sophistry destroys.

O, could I sing with thee when human strife
Lies all around with honey blossoms few,
Forget the mortal ills of mortal life
Which thou in Nature's garden never knew.
Ambition never with its darkling flights
Disturbs the tranquil beatings in thy breast;
Thy tuneful gift to Nature all thy care,
The dream of all thy nights,
Until connubial promptings thee invest,
And love bids thee thy mossy home prepare.

No gentle flowerets yet bedeck the green,
Nor paint the woodland with their motley dyes,
Save the lone snowdrop's unassuming sheen,
Or the saffron primrose with its starry eyes;
They peer from under desolation's path,
As if in mockery of Winter's reign,
Safe in the shelter of some wooded grove
From biting Boreas' wrath,
They bloom, the harbingers of Flora's train,
And nod their praises to thy lay of love.

When throbbing spring melts into summer's calm
Thy song will widen to an anthem's swell —
Powerful and stirring, holy as a psalm
That chains the feelings in its magic spell.
O for that sunny season of delight,
When, wandering down the glade, the eye beholds
Thy pinions glistening in the solar beam
That threads the woodlands bright,
When the full choristry of the bracken holds
The heart spellbound like fancies in dream.

Sing on, thou wingéd nymph, of Nature's bowers,
The heart gets younger at thy roundelay;
As summer sun disperses misty showers,
So does thy song chase pensive gloom away.
Beneath thy lofty perch the Earn sings,
Her tuneful numbers blending with thine own,
While Nature's smileless face is imaged bright
'Tween sportive eddyings
That swirl the relics of a season down
Where bright mosaic beauties woo the sight.

But thou art fled, and happiness in truth
Has fled with thee who lethargy defies;
I see thee seek "the thicket" of my youth,
In sweet Broichmore, where verdure never dies.
Is thy young mate embowered in its shade—
Impatient of her tuneful lord's return?
Then, charmer, thence the secret of that lay,
Whose thrilling beauty made
My pulses quicken and my bosom burn,
And which will live when much has passed away.

WILLIAM STEVENSON M'INTOSH.

WHILE many of our best sea-songs are the productions of landsmen, so in like manner much of the finest Scottish pastoral poetry of modern days has been coined in the brain of male and female poets who have been reared in the murky atmosphere of the towns. The subject of this sketch is a capital illustration of this singular fact. He was born at Edinburgh in 1838. At the tender age of twelve years he was apprenticed to the jewellery business, and on the expiry of the usual probationary period, he wrought for several years in London, but subsequently married and settled down in his native city. Amid the engrossing cares of business, Mr M'Intosh has yet found time to pourtray, in the genuine Doric, many graphic and admirable pictures of pastoral and city life. The specimens we give of his muse fully establish his claim to a niche in the temple of "Modern Scottish Poets."

Of unassuming manners, and of quiet, retiring habits, it may be stated that, in addition to Mr M'Intosh's gift of song, comparatively few are aware of his powers as a dramatic reader, and as an inimitable delineator of Highland character, with its catching humour and irresistible drollery, which has oft "set the table in a roar."

Like all true poets, he finds that the beauties of creation elevate the mind and whisper rapture to the soul. He has cultivated not only his gift of imagination, but also his powers of appreciation. He has searched for beauties and found them not only in the broad lines of the blue sky and glowing sunshine, the towering mountains, the sleeping valleys, and the rolling, restless ocean, but in the still small voices—the glinting and rustling of the leaves, the wee hedgerow flower, and the soft fanning of the summer breeze—every voice and every object uttering a hymn of praise to the Great Original. A keen observer of nature, our

poet has photographed, with great fidelity, the "burnie" in all its vagrant, pawky, zig-zag meanderings, while the pictures of scenery suggested by "Sweet on the Barren Mountain," indicate true lyrical power. In pieces such as "Since Willie cam Hame," the domestic feelings are also well and touchingly represented. Many other meritorious pieces might be selected, but, unfortunately, space forbids. What is here given, however, will be sufficient to show that Mr M'Intosh possesses, in no inconsiderable degree, the leading characteristics of a true Scottish poet.

THE TWA DAYS.

Doon by the burn I gaed, flooers a' were springin',
Up in the trees abune birdies sang clear;
Summer an' sunlicht my heart set a-singin',
Well I lo'ed Watty, an' Watty was near.

Noo by its banks I stray, Nature smiles never,
Leafless trees stand around, sangless an' lane;
Winter an' death seal my joy-springs for ever,
Weel I lo'ed Watty, an' Watty is gane.

AS I SAT RESTIN' ALANE.

The burnie ran between heathery braes,
An' loupit out-owre a stane!
Broun frae the bogs far up on the hills,
But glintin' wi' licht in mony wee rills,
Whaur I sat restin' alane;
An' aye it guttered, an' gurled, an' clang,
An' yattered, an' yammered, an' chirled alang,
An' cheered my heart wi' a lichtsome sang,
As I sat restin' alane.

Oh! weary was I wi' travellin' far,
As I sat me gently doon;
Weary my heart wi' the world's sad war,
An' weary my head wi' the jostle an' jar
O' life in the bustlin' toon.
But this wee burnie sae sottered an' sang,
Sae chattered, an' chirled, an' swirled alang,
I fain wad rest me the hale day lang,
An' list to its crickle an' croon.

I said, oh burnie ! broun tho' ye be,
Come tell to me here alane,
'Mong heather and moss as ye cam' doon,
Whaur gat ye the licht that glints frae yer croun,
As ye tummle out-owre that stane ?
An' the burnie brattled an' bickered alang—
An' birled, an' swirled, an' swickered, an' swang—
An' jinkit an' joukit the chuckies amang,
As I sat restin' alane.

I said, oh burnie, ye're dour whaur ye're deep,
But tell to me here alane,
While I sit, an' listen, and rest my fill,
Whaur gat ye that sang ye sing on the hill,
Like the chirm o' a happy wean ?
An' aye the burnie it lauched an' ran,
An' spattered, an' pattered, an' spirled, an' span ;
But tell'd me its tale, while tired an' wan,
I sat an' rested alane.

"I was nursed in a deep, dark loch on the hill,
Ere I could rin alane ;
But the sun lauched doon on my cradle by day,
An' played wi' the clouds that owre us lay,
Till my heart filled up wi' the rain ;
Sae I lauch to the sun as I hirple an' gang,
As I twinkle, an' twist, an' twirl alang—
As I jiggle an' joug the braes amang,
An' tummle owre ilka stane.

"An' I hae a secret as ye may ken,
A wee fish whispered to me—
'If ye rin ye will come to green braes soon
Whaur gowans, and bairns, an' lambs look doon,'
An' I'm awa' doon to see ;
An' far awa doon there's a wonderfu' deep,
Whaur ye'll lose a' yer stains, an' settle, an' sleep,
Till the sun wiles ye up to nestle an' keep,
Syne send ye in clear dew again.' "

I said, oh burnie, is this what ye croon,
As ye sing sae sweet to me?
Ye'll meet wi' muckle to hush yer sang,
An' darken yer broo as ye glide alang,
Lang ere ye win to the sea.
But noo, I'll listen, ye'll sing yer fill :
Ye'll chitter, an' chatter, and race doun the hill,
An' chirl 'mang the chuckies, an' dae what ye will,
While I sit restin' alane.

SINCE WILLIE CAM' HAME.

Oh, gusty the nicht when Willie cam' hame,
Our hopes werena bricht when Willie cam' hame,
For I had fa'en cripple an' trade a' had gane,
An' dark lour'd the clouds when Willie cam hame.

Lang ill lay my wifie, an' maist like to dee,
An' sair were we tossed on life's deep-swellin' sea,
But saft as the starlicht was wee Willie's e'e,
An' it peep'd thro' the clouds o' affliction on me.

A year noo has passed since Willie cam' hame,
Scarce ceased has the blast since Willie cam' hame,
Oor boat's blawn to sea, an' oor nets a' hae gane ;
But we're aye here thegither wi' Willie at hame.

An' Willie sits hearty an' crouse on my knee,
His mither's heart cheer'd wi' his pawkin' an' glee,
An' sweet as the sunlicht is wee Willie's e'e,
An' it shines thro' the mists o' my heart in on me.

Sae let us tak' heart noo, we're a' here at hame,
Act weel each his pairt noo, we're a' here at hame,
Nae langer feel dowie, an' dreary, an' lane,
But canty an' cheery wi' Willie at hame.

Tho' freends haud oot-owre, an' are no jist sae free,
An' what is in store there can nane o' us see ;
Like the smile o' the Lord shines that bricht lauchin' e'e,
An' it dries the heart's tears o' his mither an' me.

SWEET ON THE BARREN MOUNTAIN.

Sweet on the barren mountain is the heather bell,
Sweet is the bubbling fountain in the dewy dell :
Sweet the snow-white blossom on the hawthorn tree,
But sweeter far is Lizzie unto me.

Sweet when at daybreak roaming is the lintie's sang,
Sweet is the hour of gloaming when the day is lang ;
Sweet when sun is hottest, breezes blowing free ;
But sweeter far is Lizzie unto me.

Sweet are the trees in summer, sweet the shelter'd pool,
Sweet are the dappled cattle standing in the cool ;
Sweet the lambs that gambol o'er the gow'ny lea,
But sweeter far is Lizzie unto me.

Sweet is the sound of waves, soft-breaking on the shore,
Sweetly do mem'ries caves oft echo joys of yore ;
Sweet is hope, as light on sails far out at sea,
But sweeter far is Lizzie unto me.

JOHN PARK, D.D.

JOHN PARK was born in Greenock in 1804. He received his early training in that town, and afterwards at a boarding school in Paisley. When he left school he went to Glasgow University, and before finishing his theological studies he passed one session at the University of Aberdeen. The song "Where Gadie Rins"—the most extensively popular of several written to the same chorus—was composed by him when a student at Aberdeen. He had heard the old air whistled by a fellow student, who informed him that a Scottish officer in Egypt had been much affected and surprised on hearing a soldier's wife crooning it over to herself, and this suggested to him the song. When he received license as a preacher of the Gospel, he became assistant—first to Dr Steele of the old West Church of Greenock, afterwards to Dr Gregor of Bonhill, in Dumbartonshire. His first independent charge was as minister of a Presbyterian congregation in Liverpool, where he continued for eleven years.

During the latter part of this period Scotland was agitated by the movement that rent in twain the Presbyterian Church. Dr Park, when the crisis came, adhered to the Church in which he had been brought up and ordained, and after the Disruption he was called to the parish of Glencairn, in Dumfriesshire. After abiding eleven years in the rural seclusion of Glencairn, he was induced to quit it when called upon to undertake the first charge of the Collegiate Parish Church of St Andrews. There he won the esteem and admiration of all connected with the city, till his very sudden and much lamented death in 1865. Dr Chas. Rogers in his "Scottish Minstrel" says that in his important sphere at St Andrews, Dr Park "obtained remarkable acceptance. His discourses, pervaded by

enlightened views of Divine truth, attracted large audiences, and he was beloved for his genial manners in private society."

Dr Park was endowed with tastes of the highest order. First, his fondness for drawing, and afterwards for painting was scarcely less strong than his love of poetry. The sketches he has left are enough to show that had painting ever been more than an occasional amusement he might have attained to high excellence in the art. But of all the fine arts, Music was the one for which he had the warmest love. Painting, or the expression of beauty through form and colour, he touched with a part of his being; poetry, or the expression in words of beautiful thought and feeling, he touched with a larger part of it. But Music was his native element. Through this channel all that was deepest and best in him most naturally and freely uttered itself.

The melody of his songs is of a high order. Elevated thought, pure and delicate feeling and noble aspiration breathe through all his lyrics, and the expression of these sentiments frequently reaches a fine felicity. Perhaps Dr Park never set himself to train his power of expression to that elaborate finish which can be attained by dint of art. Yet everywhere in his songs we find the natural gush, the woodland warble that belongs to lyrical genius. To form a just estimate of the poetry of these songs, it must be remembered that they were rather the lonely communings of a heart with itself—the overflow by which it relieved its fulness—than compositions written for the eyes of strangers. Moreover, in composing them, the music was uppermost in the author's thoughts. The words were entirely subordinate to the inspiring melody that was singing itself through his soul. Had he been composing words to be written down and read in a book he would have no doubt given them more literary finish. As they are, they are full of the true music of

the heart. No other land possesses a larger band of native lyrists than Scotland does—songsters who have made their native air musical with their melodies. To that large company, Dr Park has added one more honoured name. Those who do not yield to the too common belief that poets merely use fine words, will overhear in many, and distinctly hear in some, a deep undertone of sadness as for some object loved and lost. From introductory notice by the late Principal Shairp, LL.D., in "Songs composed and in part written by the late Rev. John Park, D.D.," we learn that the "undertone of sadness, if rumour vaguely heard speaks true, came from no mere phantasy, but had a real and very deep root in the affections. What that wound may have been I know not. If he ever spoke of it to anyone, they are not now living; and none of those younger than himself would have ventured to allude to it, even though they had desired to do so. It is enough to know that there is believed to have been some real ground for the sadness that breathes through many of his songs, and that it found its only utterance in stray melodies of word and music."

BRIGHT THROUGH SCENES OF BEAUTY.

Bright through scenes of beauty gliding,
  Were thy face and form so fair,
And of all there's nought abiding,
  Save thy radiant image there.
Vainly would I trace in semblance
  Lake or mountain, tow'r or tree;
Ev'ry scene in dear remembrance
  Melts into a dream of thee.

Lovely was the morning shining,
  Lovelier far thy meeting smile,
Pensive too the eve's declining,
  Sweeter far thy looks the while;
Sweet the sound of Alpine fountains,
  But more sweet thy voice's tone—
Dreary night now veils the mountains,
  Drearier that I am alone.

And to me perhaps thou'lt ever
Be the dream which thou art now,
Like a gleam upon the river,
Like a rare bird from the bough.
Thou art come and gone, but over
Ev'ry thought of this bright shore,
Thy fair face and form shall hover
Till the heart can beat no more.

THE HAPPY RETURN.

While the day was declining,
But eve's star still shining,
I sought long a stranger
The home of my love.
The sweet birds were singing,
And all the sky ringing,
With notes of glad welcome around and above ;
But oh, with what feeling I heard gently stealing
Her own voice in song through the gloom of the grove.

The song of the days when we lov'd in our childhood,
And wept as it seem'd that those hours were o'er ;
She sang of those vows we had pledged in wild wood,
And call'd for the wanderer homeward once more,
And then mid'st her sighing she heard me replying
In song which we both lov'd in seasons of yore.

Oh, blessings on song, 'tis a spring of pure pleasures,
In grief or in gladness, on land or on sea,
In boyhood or age the heart bounds to its measures,
'Tis the plaint of the slave and the shout of the free ;
And blessings on song that the best of all treasures
My heart's truest love, it brought kindly to me.

WHEN YOUTH MADE ALL BRIGHT.

When youth made all bright upon land or sea,
And life was delight how I loved thee,
The dream was false, and my hope was vain,
Yet, oh ! for one day of those days again.

When the spring first showers her buds on the tree,
Amid'st fragrance and flowers I think of thee,
For a light is gone and a song is o'er,
Which no spring's dawn can ever restore.

When the winter's winds waken the desolate sea,
With a heart more forsaken I think of thee,
Of thee and the hopes that were once my boast
Ere thy bloom and thy faith were wither'd and lost.

Yet tho' it has no longer its charms for me,
And tho' sorrow grows stronger I'll think of thee,
Till the green turf is over my heart's last lair,
And the wrongs of thy lover be silent there.

THE DEER ARE AWAY TO THE SILVER WOOD.

The deer are away to the silver wood,
And the sheep in the hillside broom ;
The old hound bays at the distant flood,
And the stars peep forth in the gloom ;
Oh sweetly sang the nightingale
"My love is fair and true."
She heard an answer down the vale,
And off to him she flew :
Would I could tell so sweet a tale
Love of my soul to you.

Why tarries the lady moon to-night,
The sky is clear and chill,
The mountain line with frost grows white,
And the elves are out on the hill ;
I heard the stock-dove when she sang
"My love is fair and true."
Deep in the wood an answer rang,
And she departed too—
Is there no breeze can find a tongue
Love of my soul to you.

The knight of slumber drains the cup,
And the pilgrim quaffs the stream,
And the violets dew I've drank it up,
And sweetly I shall dream,
For in mine ear a linnet sings
"Your love is fair and true,
And Heav'n ordaining meaner things
Shall grant you meet him too,"
Blest be the hour this love of me brings
Love of my soul to you.

NOW HAVE THE MOUNTAIN SPIRITS HUNG.

Now have the mountain spirits hung
Their mantles of mist on the mountain side,
Now have the heralds of morning flung
The joy of her coming o'er meadow and tide.
Wearily now the stars retire
For the skies are glowing gaily ;
The fairies have hush'd their moonlight choir,
And over the wold their vapoury fire,

Though dancing e'en yet, shines palely ;
Then rise, oh rise, the daylight is springing
In glory up winging from yon bright sea ;
Unclose those eyes, the breezes are bringing
The balmiest odours of morn for thee.
Know'st thou the voice which woos thee now ?
Loftier far in thine ear 'twould speak,
Oh, come let the dawn see her light in thy brow,
And glow in the roses which tinge thy cheek.
Merrily rocks the ship in the bay,
And the sailors are cheering loudly,
And the her'n is shrieking and soaring away,
And landward the lark springs up in the ray,
And carols her matin hymn proudly.
Then rise, oh rise, the heavens are ringing
With choristers singing from cloud and tree,
Unclose those eyes, the hours are winging,
And morning without thee is night to me.

WHERE GADIE RINS.

Oh, an' I were where Gadie rins,
Where Gadie rins, where Gadie rins,
Oh, an' I were where Gadie rins,
At the back o' Benochie.

I wish I were where Gadie rins,
'Mang fragrant heath and yellow whins,
Or, brawlin' doun the bosky linns,
At the back o' Benochie ;

To hear ance mair the blackbird's sang,
To wander birks and braes amang,
Wi' frien's and fav'rites, left sae lang,
At the back o' Benochie.

How mony a day, in blythe spring-time,
How mony a day, in summer's prime,
I wiled awa' my careless time
On the heights o' Benochie.

Ah, Fortune's flowers wi' thorns are rife,
And walth is won wi' grief and strife—
Ae day gi'e me o' youthfu' life
At the back o' Benochie.

Oh, Mary ! there on ilka nicht,
When baith our hearts were young and licht,
We've wander'd, when the moon was bricht,
Wi' speeches fond and free.

Oh ! ance, ance mair, where Gadie rins,
Where Gadie rins, where Gadie rins—
Oh ! micht I dee where Gadie rins
At the back o' Benochie.

JAMES PENNYCOOK BROWN,

AUTHOR of "Poetical Ephemeras" (Aberdeen: A. Brown & Co., 1831) and other works, was a native of Kincardineshire, where his father was a farmer, but who afterwards removed to Brechin, Forfarshire, where he settled down as an auctioneer, and in his old age wrought as a jobbing gardener. His mother, whose name was Pennycook, was a native of Brechin, and many relatives of the family were then resident there, although the name is now extinct in that town. The poet served his apprenticeship as a compositor in Elgin, and subsequently worked in the office of the *Aberdeen Journal*. There he was long a valued contributor to various newspapers and magazines. He also made distinguished and lasting friendships with the brilliant coterie of writers who started and carried on the *Aberdeen Magazine*, published by Lewis Smith. His literary friends and contributors to this magazine included John Hill Burton, the historian; John Ogilvie, of "The Imperial Dictionary;" Joseph Robertson, a voluminous writer, and editor of the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, afterwards Curator of the Historical Department of the Register House, and several other well-known literary gentlemen.

Mr Brown returned to Elgin about 1832, having got an appointment in connection with the *Courant*, and afterwards went to London as Secretary of one of the Exeter Hall societies. He ultimately emigrated to Canada, whence he returned, and having visited

his friends in Brechin, he again settled down in Elgin, where he is said to have died about the year 1863. We are indebted for most of these details to the writer of an excellent series of articles appearing in the *Aberdeen Free Press*, entitled "The Bards of Bon-Accord," who says that, when "we consider the limited opportunities for culture possessed by a handicraftsman fifty years ago, his poems are a marvel of taste and talent. He is the first of our working men poets who aimed at and reached a dexterity in the manipulation of felicitous language, which had hitherto been supposed to be the fruit of learned ease and cultured leisure alone. He seems to have had an inborn literary faculty which leaped into the possession of that which ordinary mortals may labour for and yet never attain. His poems are usually of the kind which touch the soft and mellowing minor chords of human feeling, and they are all written with a degree of elegance and refinement which bespeak considerable aptitude in him for dealing with the sentimental and pathetic. Even in minds of the highest culture there are certain moods in which poetry like Pennycook Brown's gives more exquisite pleasure than would that of a far greater genius. On the other hand, he is just sufficiently elevated above the ordinary level of intelligence to make the effort to enter into his feelings more a pleasure than a strain; hence his fine imagination becomes a part of one's own with so little labour that as his finely turned thoughts slip into the mind there is felt somewhat of that feeling of relief and that positive happiness which a writer himself experiences in being able to embody his own thoughts in words."

THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

The poison cup is in his hand, and in his heart despair,
For wildly back upon the earth he flings his weight of care;
The glory of his soul is gone, and clouds are gathering fast
Around his weary spirit's shrine, the darkest and the last.

His palaces of hope are crushed, that once so brightly shone ;
The golden light of glorious fame from off his path has gone ;
The flowers are dead that promised wreaths to bind his burning brow,
The sweet songs of his wondrous lyre are worthless offerings now.

The earth has lost the loveliness it once to him had borne,
When from the east the gorgeous sun strode forth with smiling morn ;
The stars that everlastingly look from the lofty sky
Seem not to him the same beneath whose light he loved to lie !

Now he has drunk the deadly drug, to chase his woes away,
And through his heart the poison flows in willingness to slay ;
Yet in his breast at that dark hour, when death grows wildly strong,
He feels the workings of his gift,—the noble gift of song !

And pouring forth the burning thoughts that crowd his troubled mind,
He leaves the earth with all its cares, and blighted hopes behind,
He pours them from his spirit's fount, the glowing words of fire,
Whilst boldly with his youthful hand is swept the tuneful lyre.

"Take back thine own, thou earth ! to me thou hast no mother been,
Else thou would'st not have left me thus in this my latest scene ;
Thou would'st have given to me the love, which mortal mothers give,
And flung a glory o'er my path, and wooed my soul to live.

But I depart, and leave behind, to fill the trump of Fame,
A tale of sorrow and delight—a deathless, blighted name ;
And my wild songs will yet be sung where stately anthems roll,
And fair lips yet will ask of heaven peace to the minstrel's soul.

I had not thought thus to have died, when, in my childhood's prime,
I floated in Hope's rainbow bark adown the stream of time ;
While yet my head with mimic wreaths of future fame was crowned— .
Wreaths which around my youthful brow in pride my sisters bound.

They are not with me now—I drink the cup of grief alone,
But they will deeper sorrow feel when I, their hope, am gone
Forever from among their smiles and hours of sinless mirth !—
Oh ! think not of them now, my soul, 'twill win me back to earth !

Back to that earth where I have pined in pride and feeling long,
But now my panting spirit's thoughts grow wildly dark and strong;
And the blue beauty of the sky, and proud waves rolling free,
And earth, with all its lovely flowers, are pleasureless to me.

And yet upon the glowing sky, and on the boundless sweep
Of ocean's dark unfettered waves uplifted from the deep;
And on the blushing flowers of earth, methinks, to look once more
Would yield one moment's sinless joy ere passion's strife be o'er.

But darker now my spirit grows—I feel that death is near,
Yet I shall meet the hoary king without one pang of fear!
O death! now lightly press my breast, for strong indeed thou art,
I feel thy chilling iron hand upon my fluttering heart.

I feel it—yet a moment hence, and then I shall be free,—
Nor in thy shadowy land, O death, will I abide with thee,
But fly to where some kindred souls in glory ever dwell!—
Sisters and lyre! earth, sea, and sky! to all—a long farewell!"

THE VOICES OF OUR HOME.

O, joy divine, to meet again
The loved, the kindest, best;
To feel affection's blissful pain
Come sleep-like o'er the breast;
To hear, when those dear hearts we meet,
When back to it we come,
The voices of our home—how sweet
The voices of our home.

They thrill on every slumbering chord
That's twined around the heart,
The soft tones of each silver word
Life's sweetest bliss impart;
They waken thoughts—that long have slept—
A beautiful array
Of fairy dreams, by memory kept,
Since childhood's brightest day.

They speak the speech, the very tones
Of those who now are dead—
The heaven-aspiring lovely ones
That's from life's darkness fled;—
They sing the very songs they sung;
Sweet melodies of grief—
A sadness 'mid joy's summer flung,
Like autumn's first dead leaf.

The voices of our home—Oh, there
Are no soft sounds on earth
Fraught with like sympathy, to share
Our sadness and our mirth—
To brighten the dark clouds of woe
That shadow all like night—
Or bid the heart's deep fountains flow
With waters of delight.

Oh, other sounds may raise a sigh,
Or call the glistening tears
Into the dim and vacant eye,
Where nought but grief appears;
But, oh, they are not half so sweet
To weary hearts that roam,
As are those tones we gladly greet—
The voices of our home.

INFANTINE INQUIRIES.

Tell me, O mother, when I grow old,
Will my hair, which my sisters say is like gold,
Grow grey as the old man's, weak and poor,
Who asked for alms at our pillared door?
Will I look as sad, will I speak as slow,
As he, when he told us his tale of woe?
Will my hands then shake, and my eyes be dim?
Tell me, O mother! will I grow like him?

He said—but I knew not what he meant—
That his aged heart with sorrow was rent.
He spoke of the grave as a place of rest,
Where the weary sleep in peace, and are blest;
And he told how his kindred there were laid,
And the friends with whom in his youth he played:
And tears from the eyes of the old man fell,
And my sisters wept as they heard his tale.

He spoke of a home, where, in childhood's glee,
He chased from the wild flowers the singing bee;
And followed afar, with a heart as light
As its sparkling wings, the butterfly's flight;
And pulled young flowers, where they grew 'neath the beams
Of the sun's fair light, by his own blue streams;—
Yet he left all these, through the earth to roam.
Why, O mother! did he leave his home?

"Calm thy young thoughts, my own fair child,
The fancies of youth in age are beguiled;—
Though pale grow thy cheeks, and thy hair turn grey,
Time cannot steal the soul's youth away.

There's a land of which thou hast heard me speak,
Where age never wrinkles the dweller's cheek ;
But in joy they live, fair boy, like thee—
It was there that the old man longed to be.

For he knew that those with whom he had played,
In his heart's young joy, 'neath their cottage shade—
Whose love he shared, when their songs and mirth
Brightened the gloom of this sinful earth—
Whose names from our world had passed away,
As flowers in the breath of an autumn day—
He knew that they, with all suffering done,
Encircled the throne of the Holy One.

Though ours be a pillared and lofty home,
Where Want with his pale train never may come,
Oh ! scorn not the poor, with the scorner's jest,
Who seek in the shade of our hall to rest ;
For He who hath made them poor may soon
Darken the sky of our glowing noon,
And leave us with woe, in the world's bleak wild !
Oh ! soften the griefs of the poor, my child."

WHEN LIFE'S LAMP IS WANING.

When life's lamp is waning
In sadness away,
When my spirit is straining
Its prison of clay,
That, like a bird soaring
In beauty and light,
It may reach by adoring
The land ever bright,
For me be no mourning— the sunbeam of faith
Will lighten my soul through the valley of death.

When summer flowers, blooming
On valley and hill,
The soft winds perfuming
With sweetness at will,
In beauty are growing
Where silent I lie,
Whilst round them is flowing
The light of the sky,
Let not thy soul's gladness with grief be o'ercast—
Rejoice that the woes of the weary are past.

When beauty is singing
The songs that were mine,
When young hopes are flinging
A radiance divine

O'er life's clouds of sorrow,
That darken the heart,
Oh, then may thine borrow
Of brightness a part,
And soar o'er the darkness, and wildering gloom,
That shroud from the living the light of the tomb.

And when thou art gazing
On things fair and bright;
When, in the west blazing,
The sun yields to night;
When darkness is shading
The stars of the sky;
When winds are far spreading
Their musical sigh,
Oh, let thy thoughts, wandering back to past years,
Recall the wild songs of my gladness and tears.

GEORGE H. KINNEAR,

UNDER the title of "Endymion" and other *noms-de-plume*, has contributed at intervals during the last five years to the "Poet's Corner" of the *Dundee Weekly News* and other newspapers. He was born at Forfar in 1863, and received his education in the East Burgh Public School there, under the late Mr James Smith, who, as our readers are aware, for a number of years contributed to the local journals under the *nom-de-plume* of "Vinney." From this genial and talented poet, who died in 1885, he seems to have received his first impulse to verse-making. Many of Mr Smith's pleasing compositions he used to transcribe when a pupil teacher under him. Mr Kinnear attended the Edinburgh Church of Scotland Training College for two sessions, and he is presently engaged as first assistant in Lochgelly Public School, Fifeshire. His songs are graceful and simple, and several of his poems are smooth and thoughtful. Regarding the

poem we quote—"The Battle of Restennet"—it might be said that the hostile armies having encountered each other at Restennet, a village in Angus or Forfarshire, a sanguinary conflict ensued, which continued until the night closed upon an uncertain victory. The death of Feredethus appeared to give the Scots the honour of the day; for he, when he saw the spirits of his men beginning to droop in the battle, rushed with a band of noble youths into the wildest of the Scots, where, being cut off from the main army, he fell, together with the flower of his nobility.

A SERMON FROM THE BROOK.

Babbling from the rocky dell,
Murmuring thro' the grassy vale,
Creeping o'er the cataract steep,
Gushing thro' the gully deep;
Ever this one tale I tell,
"God's great mercies never fail."

By the little birds caressed,
By the glassy sunbeams kissed,
Thro' the meadow, thro' the wood,
Dancing in a merry mood;
Still this is the tale I tell,
"God's great mercies never fail."

Now in bushy thicket lost,
Now by restless mill-wheel tossed,
Down the valley to the sea,
Lost in one grand melody;
This the one great tale I tell,
"God's great mercies never fail."

NATURE.

Have ye e'er heard the voices of Nature,
As they're borne on the wings of the breeze—
The song of the lark from the blue lift,
The moan of the wind thro' the trees;
The greeting that waits the glad morning
From the throats of the gay feathered throng,
The hum of the bee as it wanders
From flower to flower all the day long?

Have ye e'er marked the beauties of Nature—
The sun as he sets 'neath yon hill,
The moon in her pale, silent grandeur,
The sunbeam's bright glance on the rill;
The meadows 'neath summer's bright verdure,
Or autumn's more glorious glow!
Ah! scenes of rarer beauty than these
The painter's art never could show.

Have ye e'er learn'd the lessons that Nature
Is fain in her wisdom to teach?
With thousand-tongued voice she is speaking
In words of deep counsel to each.
Read her deep pages, then, with devotion,
Nor deem that she's loth to impart
The best of the treasures of wisdom
That cluster around her great heart.

THE BATTLE OF RESTENNET.

"Ho! trusty men, say, shall it be
That from the craven ye shall flee,
Or basely quit the field?"
So Feredethus to his men,
In grim array upon the plain,
These words of question gave.
And fiercely burned the Monarch's eye,
As from his lips these proud words fly,
To where his warriors brave
With ardour keen wait for the fray
That would their valour prove that day,
Or gave them craven warrior's name,
Surrounded by disgrace and shame.
Quick answer got he from his men;
For with a cheer that rent the plain
Each waved his broadsword high.
"Then be it so, let trumpet's tongue
Tell Alpin that the gage is flung,
And waits his daring hand."
In eager contest soon they close;
A deadly fury marks their blows,
In carnage far and wide.
Anon the day with Alpin rests,
As rise and fall his warriors' crests,
Like ocean's stormy tide.
Now Feredethus' wild warriors gain
The vantage of the battle plain,
Then driven back amain.
From morn, when Sol with sunny ray
Lit up the land with radiance gay,

Until he kissed the ruddy west,
The foeman's sword is ne'er at rest.
With wild onslaught foe falls on foe
And vanquished warriors, levelled low,
With grievous groanings die.
O'erwhelmed by many a bloody stroke,
The Pictish ranks failed—wavered—broke—
When Feredethus' keen warlike eye,
Perceiving that defeat was nigh,
With three score brave youths clears a way
Into the thickest of the fray ;
Fierce fall their strokes ; but all in vain,
For fiercer blows with might and main
From Alpin's warriors come.
Around that valiant band they close,
Who quickly fall like autumn rose
By stormy tempest blown.
Brave Fighting Men,* your leader slain,
Ye now may scour the battle plain—
May seek the mountain dweller's cave,
And tell your deeds of valour brave,
Mourn the lost cause ye battled for,
And proud Scot leave victorious warrior.

DANIEL CARMICHAEL.

THE talented and ingenious subject of this sketch was born in Alloa, Clackmannanshire, in 1826. He is the author of two volumes of poetry, specially interesting not only on account of their poetical merits, but also from the fact that, although in no way connected with the printing profession, the press on which they were printed was the author's own handicraft. He also set up the type, and printed both volumes in his leisure hours. His first effort—"Recreations in Rhyme," although only issued for private circulation, was commented on in high terms by several reviewers. It is now before us, and is altogether a literary curio-

* Pict, in the old Celtic language, signifies a Fighting Man.

sity, reflecting much credit on the patience, perseverance, and mechanical as well as mental powers of the poet. Mr Carmichael's second effort—"Rhyming Lilts and Doric Lays"—met with immediate success, and a large edition was speedily sold. But, he tells us, the anxiety and labour it occasioned by its production nearly proved his *finis*. Overwork and excitement brought about serious results. It was scarcely out of his hands when he was struck down with brain fever, which laid him aside for three months. We can readily imagine the truth of what he says when he informs us that "few can understand the toil and mental anxiety experienced during the fifteen months I laboured at the work. Yet it was a labour of love. The joy and satisfaction of seeing one's thoughts rising up in noble type before the eye was something to struggle for and feel proud of."

We are told that his father, while following the trade of a stone mason in Edinburgh, saw the poet Burns in the street, and had met him at some lodge of the "mystic craft." Mr Carmichael at a very early age evinced his love for poetry. While quite a little fellow, he could recite long "screeds" from Home's "Douglas," "The Gentle Shepherd," and "Tam o' Shanter." An old well-thumbed copy of Blind Harry's "Wallace" fell into his hands when at school, which he read again and again with the greatest delight. He was sent early to school, which "he never took kindly to," although he afterwards attended with great diligence evening classes in Edinburgh and also in Glasgow. As he became a confirmed truant, and his only delight was in scouring through the woods and fields, he was, while yet a mere boy, sent to work—first in a brickfield, and afterwards in a mill. On the death of his father the family removed to Edinburgh, where he learned the trade of an engineer, which he still follows.

Although early addicted to verse writing, it was not

till he was overtaken by deafness that he began to pay his addresses to the Muse. As he was thus cut off from all other enjoyments, self-communion took the place of those pleasures that were denied to him. His affliction also put an end to all hope of promotion in his profession. Previous to this, and occasionally still, he contributed sketches in prose and verse to the columns of the *Alloa Advertiser*, the *Porcupine* (a social, political, and satirical journal), the *Ladies' Journal*, the *Scottish Reader*, &c. Many of his poems have also been quoted in the *Scottish American Journal*, and other American newspapers. And now, after a residence of twenty-four years in England, he is still as lively and light of foot as ever, and with a happy heart enjoys a "twa-handit crack wi' an' auld frien' in the guid braid Doric." He has almost ready for the press a large selection from his very fruitful pen. His utterances possess a charm of freshness that shows no sign of effort; they are excellent in measure and outward clothing, full of poetic feeling and thoughts which elevate and refine. Many of his descriptive verses on Scottish character are exceedingly racy, and his pictures of the joys and sorrows of humble life contain much quiet humour and artless pathos.

MY FIDDLE AN' ME.

By the couthie fireside wi' my bonnie auld fiddle,
I rosin an' rub, an' wi' ithers ne'er meddle,
But stick to my freen', for we nicely agree—
There's naething disturbs the auld fiddle an' me.

Tired wi' the day's toils, I just tak' my freen' doon,
Then screw him a' ticht, an' when finely in tune,
Twa scrunts o'er the stringe make my troubles a' flee—
He's aye a consoler—the fiddle to me.

The tones are sae lively, sae dulcet, an' saft,
They'd move ye to tears, or wi' mirth drive ye daft,
Mak' ye shuffle an' cut, or sing loodly wi' glee—
He's a cantie auld cronie—the fiddle to me.

The cares o' the warld they soon flee awa',
When gently across him I ance get a draw,
Political warfare may a' gang agee—
We belang to nae party—the fiddle an' me.

We carena tho' statesmen may quarrel or frown,
Atween them bring monarchs or dynasties down,
O'er a lively bit lilt we hae naething to dree',
But laugh at them a'—the auld fiddle an' me.

At a' times we're welcome wherever we gang,
At wedding or wake we are never far wrang,
In braw gilded ha', or upon the green lea—
We keep up the fun—the auld fiddle an' me.

But tho' we're aye cheerie, contented, an' a',
Fu' brawlie we ken we may soon get a ca',
Sae when the time comes, lay us doon cannilie,
Side by side, there to rest—the auld fiddle an' me.

A BIG TEA KETTLE.

Come, my guid pen, for now I ettle
To sing a sang aboot a kettle,
  Sae gawsie, big, and braw—
When sitting there upon the hob,
Just like a muckle sonsie glob,
  Without a speck or flaw.

Ye've set me on to moralise
Upon yer beauty an' yer size,
  An' mony orra uses
Then oot o' you there micht be made,
To name them a' I am afraid
  Micht fricht awa the Muses.

I thocht at ance ye'd dae nae ill
To boil a mash for whisky still,
  Or for a Templar's brew.
If polished weel wi' blacklead brushes,
Ye'd put the brass anes a' to blushes,
  They'd hae nae chance wi' you.

Or at the New Year by the fire,
Yer no the chap I'm sure to tire,
  Or ever to rin dry.
For coffee, toddy, or for tea,
Wha could doot yer ability
  To keep up the supply?

An' when my mind's upon the rack,
Yer just like some guid-natured black,
  Sitting sonsie smiling

Upon the hob there by the fire,
Attuning yer bit lively lyre,
When on the point o' boiling.

Wi' "Carron" stamp'd upon your lid,
Shows that yer come o' gentle bluid—
A weel connected urn,
That has sma' chance to bring disgrace
Upon that auld historic place
Near to fam'd Bannockburn.

An' when yer span o' life is run,
They'll melt ye doon an' mak a gun
Out o' the honest metal.
But distant be that waefu' day,
When a' thy glory's passed away,
Thou muckle braw tea kettle.

DRESSING DOLLY.

Come, my pretty little Dolly
With the sparkling bright blue eyes,
Merry, laughing little drollie,
Looking very prim and wise;
With your wavy ringlets golden,
Rosy cheeks and dimpled chin;
All thy beauties now unfolding,
Thing of joy, all hearts to win.

I will deck you, little beauty,
Out in fashion's robes so gay;
For to me 'tis joy and duty
All thy graces to display.
Then in haunts of *ton* a rover,
Spreading out so full and grand
With an ample "dress improver,"
Admiration you'll command.

Now let's see my little pretty
In this jacket neat and trim,
Fitting like a glove wee Chitty
Round the waist so neat and slim.
And this skirt of glossy satin,
Frilled and kilted in first style,
With this duckie of a hat in
The Welsh pattern and soft pile.

High-heeled boots will make my sweetest
Move along with noble gait;
Laced up tightly—ay, the neatest,
Latest thing to captivate.

All will own my Dolly's charms,
Come and worship at her feet;
Sighing swains around in swarms,
For her smiles they will compete.

Then a coach we'll have for Dolly,
With a pair of spanking greys;
Amongst cushions she shall loll aye—
Like a lady all her ways.
Servants shall attend upon her,
All her wishes be their care;
Her to humour and to honour
Time nor labour they'll not spare.

Now a name to choose for Dolly—
Shall we call her Eveline,
Ann or Annie, Jane or Molly,
Rosebud, Pink, or Caroline?
At the christ'ning, oh! how merry,
It shall be a royal feast—
Cakes, and sweets, and apple sherry—
And Jack Horner shall be priest.

FOSSIL TAM.

Nae doot but ye a' ken oor frien', Fossil Tam,
That's sure to be met wi' whaurever ye gang;
He's aye on the move, turn what way ye like,
By highway or byeway, or tumble-doon dyke.
Whiles boring in hillocks just like an auld mole,
Or chipping at stanes in some auld quarry hole,
On the hunt for some relic or specimens rare,
He's sure aye to hoard wi' the greatest o' care.

A proper collector is Tam,--no mistake,
I'd just like to see the auld thing he won't take;
A bit of auld airn—nane can tell what it is,
Is sure to put Tam in a terrible fizz.
He'll get out his specks or magnifying glass,
Examine it weel e'er a verdict he'll pass.
But he's aye sure to find it a purpose or name,
A spear-head or pike, that's been left by the Dane,—
Maist likely the point o' the Roman's fam'd lance,
But in fact an auld heuck, as might be seen at a glance.

So great is his knowledge o' geology,
He'd mak' oot a dander the root o' a tree;
An' tho' whiles he drops on a specimen fine,
Its class or formation he cannot define.
But Tam, for a' that, has a smatter o' sense,
Back't up wi' an extra amount a' pretence.
Yet guileless an' happy, an' open to cram,
Nane's ever offended wi' auld Fossil Tam.

SHILLISHALLY.

It's weel ye dinna ken the chiel
  I tak' the pen to write aboot;
Protected sae, I certain feel,
  Ye'll naething hae to flyte aboot.
A moral man is he an' guid,
  Quite harmless too, I'll no deny;
Will maist do onything he's bid,
  Or "see aboot it by-an'-bye."

Ah, there it is, that's just his style,
  Ye ne'er can pin him to a point;
Tho' open-hearted, free o' guile,
  On firm resolve he's oot o' joint.
He reasons weel, brawlie he kens
  Hoo mony shillings mak' a pound,
That little fac' he comprehen's,
  Sane on that same is ever found.

No that he's niggardly inclined,
  His heart boils o'er wi' charity;
If he could just mak' up his mind,
  Wi' open hand he'd freely gi'e.
But ever dootin', never sure,
  Tho' honest his intentions a';
Firm-fixed his mind ne'er is an 'oor,
  The like o' him ye never saw.

He's coorted lasses by the score,
  Wi' matrimony in his eye;
Has named the day, the minute, or—
  To "see about it by-an'-bye.
Nae need to hurry, plenty time,
  Ae day will dae as weel's anither;"
He's just as funky as my rhyme,
  An' far mair fu' o' doot an' swither.

THE LAST "TANNER."

Farewell, my last "tanner," with thee I must part,
Tho' now worn and crooked, thou'rt good for a quart;
But when the quart's "punished," I cannot surmise
Where a poor thirsty mortal another can rise.

So moralised Bill, in a deep reveree,
Profoundly dejected, a week on the spree;
At other times reckoned a very good planner,
But sorely perplexed now about his last "tanner."

The way of investment gave no thought at all,
He was clear on that point, tho' the sum it was small;

How long it would last, and how far it would go,
Was all that Bill wanted at present to know.

This "tanner" had long been a favourite of Bill's,
As a charm he'd prized it 'gainst all sort of ills;
But now like all others, to fate he must bow,
Tho' it was a trial to part with it so.

Bill, now nearly sunk 'neath despondency's banner,
Was just on the point there of "melting" his "tanner,"
When a voice within whispered—"Come be of good cheer,
Stick fast to the tanner, be done with the beer."

He stuck to the "tanner," and stuck to his work,
No more at the corners was seen for to lurk;
A change too there was to be seen in his manner,
A watch in his fob, where for luck hung the "tanner."

THE NEWHAVEN FISHWIFE.

A wee bit doon frae Embro' toon,
Lies bonnie guid Newhaven,
Whaur honest fisher bodies dwall,
As sure as ye are leevin';
The men are brave, the lassies braw,
An' bloomin' trig an' gausie,
They tak' the shine oot o' them a'
On bonnie Embro' causie.

Some forty years hae gane an' mair,
Since there that I was born,
I min' the very 'oor an' day
As weel's it wis the morn.
'Mang herrin' scales an' oyster shells
I played when a bit lassie,
But noo ye see I'm big an' braw,
The pride o' Embro' causie.

As soon as I cou'd carry a creel,
An' growin' strang an' cheekie,
My mither sent me aff wi' fish
To sell up in Auld Reekie.
An' mither-like she cautioned me
To shun the path that's evil,
But for the bonnie fish aye charge
Three times their worth, that's ceevil.

An' watch the lads in Embro' toon,
For they are gey deceivin',
No like us innocents doon here
In bonnie gude Newhaven.

An' min' ye aye be true an' leal
To oor braw fisher laddies,
Wha brave the perils o' the Forth
To catch the caller haddies.

But noo I'm married, bless yer hearts,
I needna blush to name, sirs,
That little fact, or tell ye whaur
I live when I'm at hame, sirs—
Doon by the fit o' the Whale Brae,
Ye'll fin my han'some dwallin',
An' roon the door 'mang oyster shells
Sax bonnie bairns sprawlin'.

Sae when ye dander doon that way
Just speer for Nancy Buckie,
Ye'll get a fisher's welcome true,
An' something else for luck aye.
An' ladies they are sure to get
(What's really worth receivin'),
Baith health an' strength an' rosy cheeks
For naething at Newhaven.

ALEXANDER GORDON.

ALEXANDER GORDON was born in Aberdeen about 1809. He received his education at Gordon's Hospital, and afterwards began an apprenticeship to the shoemaker trade. Young Gordon, however, soon felt the occupation uncongenial, and left the "cobbler's stool," and became a clerk in the employment of Messrs Hadden at Grandholm. At this early period, we are informed by Mr W. P. Smith, Aberdeen, to whom we are indebted for the particulars of this sketch, his poetical powers began to be manifested. A poem in the *Aberdeen Shaver* (a scurrilous, but clever and short lived publication), cost him his situation. He made his way to Dundee, where he was appointed Secretary to the Hecklers' Union, but got into difficulties through his open and unfaltering

advocacy of the principles set forth in the People's Charter. Although thus opposed to the ruling powers, he determined ultimately to enter the army, and enlisted accordingly in the 78th Highlanders (the Rossshire Buffs). The rigid discipline did not, however, suit his free spirit, and he was not long in the service. Unable to "buy himself off," and not caring to desert, he resolved to feign madness, and carried out his purpose with rare pertinacity and skill. He was severely tested by the doctors, and was for more than six months confined in a lunatic asylum. Ultimately he was discharged and sent home, but, strangely enough, he soon after again took to soldiering. In 1835 he joined "The Spanish Legion"—a body raised to assist Queen Isabella against the Carlists. Our poet took part in several of the contests between the opposing forces in Spain, receiving a bayonet wound in the leg and a sabre cut across the forehead. At the close of the war he returned home, and settled in the Monymusk and Cluny districts, where he found employment as a forester. While thus engaged, Gordon began a series of contributions to the "Poets' Corner" of the local newspapers, sometimes signing his own name, but more frequently using the cognomen "The Planter." In these writings he found opportunity for expressing the rich thoughts that had been shooting through his brain—like golden threads getting woven into the common web of his every-day life. One of his poems, "The Court of Inquiry," was copied in many newspapers throughout the country, and it is believed to have inspired the artist who produced a full page cartoon in *Punch* referring to the subject. In after years Gordon used to speak of this as the finest compliment paid to his literary ability.

About the Crimean War period he got married, and became tenant of a croft in the parish of Cluny. The holding was small, and with tilling it he combined the occupations of planting and shoemaking. Some

twenty-six years since he removed to Inverurie, where he continued working as a shoemaker till within a few months of his death, which occurred in 1873. His quick perceptive powers and discriminating judgment —the knowledge of the world he had gained by travelling and reading—his wide acquaintance with the best authors, especially with the finest poets—all made his society most enjoyable. Those who best knew the man's talents had the deepest regret that he used them so sparingly. We agree with Mr Smith when he says that Gordon possessed the essential elements of true poetry. He had a keen sense of the beautiful in Nature, and the thoughts it evoked in him received expression in soft, smooth, and musical form. He was often urged to publish a selection of his poems, and as often put the request aside. Indeed, he had been most careless—one might almost say prodigal—in scattering his poetical work. For years he retained no copy of what he wrote, and many of his verses when they passed out of his hand were entirely lost to him. Only during his last illness did Alexander Gordon express the desire to see his poems collected. With the assistance of friends copies of a considerable number of them were obtained, but their author passed away before anything was done to present them to the public, and since his death no farther step has been taken towards that end.

THE THRUMMY MITTEN.

I canna thole your foreign glove,
I like our ain auld hamely knitten ;
There's nane like what my granny wove,
My thick and cosy thrummy mitten.

For whan the year grows cauld and auld,
And Boreas snaw and sleet is spittin',
I hap my fingers frae the cauld,
Within my thick and thrummy mitten.

Or whan I gang the neeps to pu',
And snaw wraiths on their taps are sittin',
I wadna ken weel how to do
Without my couthie thrummy mitten.

The guidman whan he tak's a walk,
His staff into his hand is fittin',
Cries—"Guidwife, rax up to the bauk,
And hand me doon my thrummy mitten."

In winter whan I yoke the ploo',
My fingers would by frost be bitten,
I find a faithfu' freen' in you—
My cosh and cosey thrummy mitten.

The wee'st callant in the hoose
Will rive his claes or lose a button,
He caresna tho' they should hang loose
If he gets on the thrummy mitten.

Whan driftin' snaws choke barn an' byre,
And to the stack there's scarcely gettin',
We wadna get a spunk of fire
Without the cauld-proof thrummy mitten.

Whan roun' the ingle in a raw,
Wi' supper pack'd till nearly splittin',
We ne'er forget to dry or thaw
The wet or frozen thrummy mitten.

THE STORM KING.

From his mountain throne
Comes a hollow moan,
When the winds rush from their caves,
He leads his noisy squadrons on,
And his gloomy banner waves.

The snow-piled clouds,
In their giant shrouds,
In his wrath he fiercely shakes:
O'er the pine-clad steep,
And the valleys deep—
They are scattered in feathery flakes.

The forest rocks,
And the spreading oaks,
Their strong arms wildly swing,
The ash tree bends,
And the dark pine rends,
With the flap of his powerful wing.

He springs from the steep,
O'er the foaming deep,
In the home-bound vessel's wake—
Till her stately mast
Bends 'neath the blast,
And her firm built timbers shake.

The cry of despair,
And the hurried prayer,
O'er the waves are wildly driven,
He gives no time
To repent of crime,
Or to seek for peace with heaven.

But that piercing cry
Is heard on high,
And the tempest's force is stayed ;
In that fearful hour
By a mightier power,
Is Nature's sceptre swayed.

Their ragings cease,
They are hush'd in peace,
When they hear His high command ;
The furious winds
He gathers, and binds
In the hollow of His hand.

THE DEW DROPS.

We are the tears which Nature sheds,
When the daylight dies and the landscape fades,
Then we fall in balmy and silent showers
On the shrivelled leaves and the drooping flowers.

On the grass we drop, and each humble blade
Has a glittering coronet round its head ;
Through the silken leaves of the rose we creep,
On the thorn and thistle at ease we sleep.

There's a sweeter fragrance when morn awakes,
And a greener hue on the woods and brakes ;
And the crawling weed and the stately tree
Are glist'ning now like a summer sea.

The waving corn is with diamonds dressed,
Each bud and each twig wears a spangled crest ;
And the mountain daisy, lowly and meek,
Has a crystal ear-drop hung on its cheek.

We have filled the cup of the heather bell ;
There the wild bee sucks from a honeyed well ;

And we trembling fall from the hanging spray,
Like the tears from a fair child wiped away.

By the fragrant zephyrs that pass we're blessed,
By the rustling leaves, ere we part, are kissed ;
As a cooling drink to the fainting given,
To the grass and flowers are the dews of heaven.

THE BUDS.

We have heard a voice from the sweet south-west,
Whisp'ring through forest and brake,
"The wintry winds have all sunk to rest,
'Tis Spring, from your sleep awake,"
And with gladness we burst from our tiny shrouds,
To busk in the sun's warm beams,
And the wayside hedge, the gardens, and woods,
Are all studded with emerald gems.

We have heard the hum of the passing bee,
In search of the op'ning flower,
She has sipp'd from the leaves of the willow tree,
It is time now to open ours.
The primrose peeps from its mossy bed,
There's a smile o'er the gay parterre,
When our leaves are unfolded and fragrance spread,
All the hues of the rainbow are there.

We have heard the cuckoo and linnet sing,
And the mavis' evening hymn ;
Now the oak his goodly shadow may fling,
We have clothed every gnarled limb ;
And the scented thorn, like a smiling bride,
Is heaving its snowy breast,
And the fair laburnum waves by its side,
With golden drapery dressed.

We have heard the sighs of the artless maid,
When she comes at the close of day,
And pensively sits in our leafy shade
To warble her love-lorn lay.
And she twines in a garland to bind her hair
The rose buds from the bush,
But her dimpled cheeks are more lovely and fair—
She has stolen our crimson blush.

THE FAIRIES' CIRCLE PARADISE, MONYMUSK.

Do you love to roam through the forest glade,
Where the sunbeams faintly creep,
Where the fir and the pine throw a gloomy shade,
And the dew-charged birches weep ?

Then come I will show you a lovely spot,
Enammell'd with shrubs and flowers,
Where no sound is heard save the cushat's note,
And enraptur'd we gaze till we've almost forgot
We are banish'd from Eden's bowers.

Yet here is a place which knows no spring,
Here no flow'rs nor grass will grow,
And a circle of beech-trees their shadows fling
O'er their name-carved trunks below.
'Twas here that at even, "the aged tell,"
A woodman wearied and worn
Sat down to rest, and in slumber fell,
Till awoke by the tinkling sound of a bell,
And the blast of a tiny horn.

In the green hillside was an opening made,
And forth came a fairy train,
On the wither'd leaves fell their pattering tread,
With a rustling sound like rain ;
And he saw from the throng the queen advance,
And spell-bind brook and rill,
When the fairies joined in their moonlight dance,
All Nature was hushed in a silent trance,
And the rushing Don stood still.

O'er the low red fire that lonesome night,
His wife his absence mourn'd,
She looked from the door in the grey daylight,
But the woodman ne'er return'd.
They search hill and hollow, and come to the place
Where they saw that the woodman had been,
A wild look of terror o'erspread every face,
While his wife sank down with a cry of distress,
For last night was the Hallowmas E'en.

They waited till that day year came round,
When the moon rose o'er the hill,
And here by the side of this circle they found
The woodman sitting still ;
He turned, and a look of surprise he cast
On his wife and his alter'd child,
He wondered the daylight had faded so fast,
But when told that a twelvemonth round had past
He never again once smiled.

Now here you may wander at eve undismayed,
For afar to some Highland vale,
They've raised their green banners, and trembling fled
From the sound of the Sabbath bell.
No unholy sounds will meet your ear,
No unhallowed form your eye,

But the murmuring rush of the river near,
Or the dusky form of the startled deer,
As he glides like a shadow by.

DONALD GRAHAM

WAS born in 1862 in the village of Comrie, Perthshire—one of the loveliest spots in "Bonnie Scotland," where Nature is found in all its varied attractions of river and loch, wood and mountain. His parents removed while he was yet very young to Blairnroar, a place about three miles from Comrie, where his father got the appointment of schoolmaster for the district. There he lived until he was fourteen, when he was apprenticed to a grocer in Alloa. On the expiry of his "time," he was for about six years employed in different parts of the country. Of that period he spent fifteen months in St Andrews —the happiest in his life. There he met many intelligent people, whose company he highly valued, including Mr G. Bruce (noticed in our First Series of this work), a gentleman who is widely known not only for his poetical talents, but also for his scientific knowledge and sterling patriotism. Mr Bruce encouraged the young poet in his aspirations and literary tastes. Mr Graham at present resides in Glasgow, where he occasionally writes verses for the newspapers and other journals. His productions, though occasionally unequal, are marked by warm national feeling and veneration for what is of historic interest. In not a few of his descriptive pieces he has with considerable imaginative power interwoven many substantial facts of history.

THE CAMERONS' GATHERING.

There's a voice in the wind over mountain and vale,
And a whisper's abroad in the land of the Gael,
And its echoes are murmuring by woodland and stream,
By corrie and loch where the pale stars gleam.

And what is that music that sounds in my ear,
Now rising, now falling, now distant, now near?
And what is that light that is flashing afar,
O'er heather, o'er bracken, o'er woodland and scaur?

'Tis the Camerons' pibroch that sounds o'er the gale,
As wild and heart-stirring it pours forth its wail,
And the light that is dancing o'er mountain and lea
Is the signal that gathers the sons of the free.

The fiery cross sweeps through the valleys again,
With the speed of the whirlwind it rushes amain,
Like the flash of the lightning on the rocks it is gleaming,
Still nearer, still brighter the warlight is beaming.

The shepherd is leaving his flocks on the hill,
And the bronzed sons of Vulcan their huts by the rill,
The hunter is leaving his game on the waste,
All arming for muster and battle in haste.

The moon's silvery rays on the valley are shining,
Where Nature's sweet grace with war's glory is twining,
The wild mountain torrent weird music is singing,
While o'er hills and in glens war's wild discords are ringing.

Soon, soon will the coronach wail o'er the slain,
For the warriors who sleep ne'er to waken again,
But long will the foemen remember their foray,
And Lochiel's furthest limits re-echo their glory.

SCOTLAND'S NAME.

What's in a name the soulless worldling cries?
All that we love, the patriot true replies—
Truth, honour, virtue, love of country's fame
Are all condensed in that one word—a name.

See yonder Scottish exiles doomed to roam
In distant lands far from their native home,
How at their country's name their bosoms swell
With pride and love more than their tongues can tell.

England! though great and worldspread thy fame,
Shalt ne'er absorb in England's Scotland's name.

No ! Scotland's name shall sound from pole to pole,
While mountains stand and mighty oceans roll.

Then Scotland, land of valour, wake once more,
Put on thy strength as wont in days of yore,
And show the world that patriotism's fire
In Scotland's sons live yet as in their sires.

Shades of our fathers ! rise once more and see
Thy country honoured and thy country free,
With patriots loyal to defend her cause,
Her name and honour, and uphold her laws.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Romantic poet, wizard of the north !
Fair Poetry's Muse her mantle round thee flung,
And mad'st thee call our country's beauty forth,
And gifted thee with more than mortal tongue.

Deep lonely glens and hoary mountains old,
At thy commanding voice their sounds awake ;
And they by thee their beauties all unfold,
And echoes long through distant countries make.

To gloomy solitudes thou gavest life,
Each mountain, vale, and lake its tale could tell
Of peaceful days or scenes of bloody strife,
Of harper's plaintive notes, or pibroch's martial swell.

And ruined towers, with ivy covered o'er,
Grim relics of a bygone warlike time,
At thy enchanting voice are filled once more
With ladies fair and knights in manhood's prime.

But nought remains save crumbling ruins grey,
At which once dwelt the chivalrous and brave ;
And gateways arched, where issued bright array,
Are broken now and silent as the grave.

All these may pass and vanish quite away,
By time's destructive hands, unknown, unsought,
But thy great works shall live till furthest day,
Fit monument of thee, O noble Scott.

THE STRANGER'S GRAVE.

By little a lowly Brahmin's cot beside the Ganges wave,
You can see a lonely monument that marks a stranger's grave ;
The grass grows o'er it rank and green beneath the palm tree's shade,
And its drooping branches seem to mourn the wanderer lowly laid.

And when the evening shadows fall a form with age bent low
Comes from within that humble cot and tells his tale of woe,
And in his plaintive Hindoo tongue, and through his flowing tears,
He tells when he was young and proud far in the bygone years.

He was a prince's eldest son, a warrior bold and free,
When war's black clouds o'erspread his land and the hated Feringhee,
Who burned his father's palace down, placed a traitor on his throne,
And fire and bloodshed filled the land, and the broken hearted's groan.

And how he led a gallant few, a patriotic band,
Till English steel and English gold them banished from the land,
And hunted them like beasts of prey till scattered far and wide,
By jungle and in mountain cave their heads were fain to hide.

Years rolled on years, the scene was changed, once more he took the field,
In Nana Sahib's ranks he rode with sword, and spear, and shield,
And courted death in many a form till Delhi's bloody day,
When once again did British might and valour win the day.

He laid his warrior's garb aside, and lived for many a year
A hermit by the river's side and jungle dark and drear,
Until one day a robber's band broke on his peaceful rest,
And roused once more the soldier's heart within the hermit's breast.

And when by numbers sore oppressed, and many a bloody wound,
When consciousness was all but fled, he heard the welcome sound
Of running footsteps hastening near, and there came one to aid,
A gallant form with British heart and trusty British blade.

He saw no more, and hours rolled by, and when once more he rose
The Briton's form lay cold in death amidst his fallen foes,
His hand still held his broken blade all cover'd o'er with gore,
But from its shell the soul had fled, alas, for evermore.

And the Brahmin gently raised the corpse, all seeming like a dream,
And dug for him a lonely grave besids the Ganges stream,
And at his head he placed the stone which all who pass may see,
And wrote thereon "Who sleeps beneath laid down his life for me."

THOMAS KNOX,

MERCHANT, temperance reformer, philanthropist, and poet, was born at Greenlaw, Berwickshire, in 1818. In an appreciative sketch in the excellent series of papers entitled "Temperance Poets and Poetry," published from time to time in the *League Journal*, we learn that his father, John Knox, who was a man of a strong and vigorous mind, and a warm friend of the temperance movement, died in 1883 at the ripe age of eighty-three, having survived about four years the subject of this sketch.

While quite a young man, Thomas Knox began to show some of those qualities that marked him in after life. In Dundee, to which place he removed after completing his apprenticeship as a warehouseman, he began an agitation for the shortening of shop hours. Removing again to Edinburgh he initiated a movement in behalf of the Saturday half-holiday, and in that, too, proved successful. The firm of Knox, Samuel & Dickson, with which he became connected, was the first to support the innovation. At an early period in his life the temperance cause gained his adhesion, which with him meant genuine and earnest advocacy. As president for many years of the Edinburgh Total Abstinence Society he found frequent opportunity for advocating temperance both on patriotic and Christian grounds. Led as a temperance reformer to direct his attention to the condition of the poorer classes, he devoted a great deal of time to the visiting of the police cells and low lodging-houses in Edinburgh. The results of his observation were published in the columns of the *Caledonian Mercury* under the title of "Modern Chronicles of the Canongate," and the revelations thus made are said to have exerted a powerful influence upon the mind of Dr Thomas Guthrie, and paved the way for his Ragged School enterprise.

Mr Knox also directed special attention to Sabbath drinking. He had a census taken of the numbers frequenting public-houses on the Lord's day; this was followed by an official enumeration, which proved even more startling; and the result was the passing of the Forbes Mackenzie Act.

Mr Knox about this time—"in the midst of his conflict with the dirt and disease, the drunkenness and crime of the city"—turned his attention to the writing of temperance poems. At public meetings in Edinburgh and elsewhere, his gifts as an amateur singer, reciter, and flute-player were universally acknowledged, and proved of much service in promoting harmony and friendly feeling. His views on the temperance question also found expression in a small collection of verses published under the title of "Rhymed Convictions of Walneerg"—the *nom-de-plume* being that of the author's native place spelt backward. Some of his pieces were also inserted in "The National Temperance Song Book," and, being set to music, were sung at public gatherings. His friend and brother poet, Mr Wm. Walker, (sketched in our Eighth Series) informs us that Mr Knox, while actively employed at the head of a large business, full of irksome detail, had a heart for the woes of the world outside, and that he was moved to give himself to a life of benevolent effort by nothing so much as by the thought of the wrongs and the sufferings of neglected children. Mr Walker says:—"The life of Thomas Knox long since taught me that a man may live a noble and useful life, and may keep himself in active sympathy with all that is best in the movements of the day, and yet be but a man 'in business.' It is a joy to me to think that he was 'in business,' and yet could write these songs, and could be a busy worker in the temperance cause, and could give time, and thought, and *heart* to the poorest of the Edinburgh waifs, to the dinnerless street arabs, and the boys of

the 'Mars' training ship, as well and as freely as to the youth of the Watt Institution, or the Widows' Fund of the Merchant Company. While his business did not prevent him from being in sympathy with the poorest, so neither did it hinder his enjoyment of the friendship of many of Edinburgh's worthiest citizens. Men like Lord Shand, and Professor Blackie, and Dr William Chambers, and the Messrs Cowan, and others, were drawn to him by the inherent nobility of his nature, quite as much as by his intense earnestness in philanthropic work; and when he was taken away, they felt, and were not ashamed to say it, that they and the community had sustained a heavy loss." Although he declined to take part in parochial or municipal affairs, Mr Knox devoted for some years a large share of his time to the concerns of the Edinburgh Merchant Company, filling the office of treasurer and master respectively. In all the proceedings of the Company Mr Knox manifested a keen interest; but the matter with which his name will be chiefly associated is the obtaining of a Provisional Order under the Endowed Institutions Act for the reconstruction of educational establishments.

Mr Knox died with startling suddenness in December, 1879. On the previous evening he had been engaged to a late hour drawing up the annual report of the Watt Institution. Although he had been ailing for a short time, he was able to be at business during the day, and after a few hours at the report, he retired to rest so well as to give no cause for anxiety. About four o'clock in the morning, however, there was a sudden change, and there was only time for a few words—a tender farewell to his wife—and a brave and true heart had ceased to beat.

Since the death of Mr Knox, the Messrs J. & R. Parlane, Paisley, published a number of his songs in a handsome volume, arranged for part-singing, with pianoforte accompaniment by Mr James Merrylees,

and the excellent introductory notice we have already referred to by Mr Walker. The volume is entitled "Scottish Temperance Songs to Scottish Airs." In this volume we have clear evidence that poetic inspiration is not all on the side of John Barleycorn, for the spirit of genuine poetry will be found here in every page. The compositions are for the most part in the Scottish dialect, in praise of the blessings of temperance, thrift, cleanliness, and manly independence, and contain pleasant pictures of happy home circles. The author was at times cheered by the thought that some of his pieces would live when he was gone. Professor Blackie on one occasion said to him that they would be sung long after he was "in the mools," and we entirely concur in the opinion of the learned and genial Professor. Speaking of his songs to Mr Walker, our poet said—"I hope they may do good: a' thing helps to keep the wheel of progress rolling onwards. The adaptation of the air 'O Nannie, wilt thou gang wi' me' to the words of 'Love Home' is a fine proof that Mr Merrylees is a musician; sing it over, and see how the words seize the air, and the air the words, till they become one fibre of heart-melody and harmony." This is but just to Mr Merrylees. He knows Scotch music thoroughly, and gives the airs in their simplicity and purity, freed from the fanciful accretions that have gathered round some of them in successive generations. In everything that Mr Knox wrote his distinct object was to endeavour to wean from evil, and to strengthen in both men and women the love of home, and the practice of what is pure and gentle. In this he was eminently successful. His songs abound in touches of warm and tender pleading, as well as in the simple eloquence of which our Scottish dialect is so susceptible. As you read the heart fills, the bosom heaves, and the gladsome or sorrowful tear trembles on the cheek. He lent dignity and strength to the temperance movement—a movement that has

outlived its humble origin, and is now rich in the heritage of noble memories. In Scotland it has had its Collins, its Kettle, and its Stirling; its Professor Miller, Dr Thomas Guthrie, William Logan, and its Thomas Knox.

YON BIRDIE.

AIR—"My ain kind dearie."

Yon birdie happin on the spray,
That sings its thrillin roundelay,
Tells a' its love the live-lang day,
To its fond feather'd dearie, O.
And oh, I wish that I could sing
My heart's love clear as yon wee thing:
Then would I gar the hale warld ring
Wi' praise o' thee, my dearie, O.

But sang nor tongue can ever tell
The raptures that within me swell,
When musin' on thy bonnie sel,
My ain true hearted dearie, O.
Our hame is aye so blithe and blest,
Weel lined and cosie as a nest,
Ilk bairnie in't an angel guest
Love lent to us, my dearie, O.

OUR COSIE HAME.

AIR—"Loudon's Bonnie Woods."

Our cosie hame, our peacefu' hame,
Is a' the warld to me, Annie;
There love keeps lit its glowin' flame—
A flame that ne'er can dee, Annie;
And there through a' the live-lang day,
Like lammies on yon sunny brae,
Our bonnie bairnies skip and play—
Their hearts rin owre wi' glee, Annie.
Near them, wha can e'er grow auld?
Near them, hearts can ne'er grow cauld;
A glint o' heaven their smiles unfauld
To lift our thoughts on hie, Annie.

What though, jostlin' on life's road,
Baith greed and pride we see, Annie;
Let's aye be thankfu' it's sae broad—
There's room for you and me, Annie.
Let big Ambition strut and strive,
Alang his weary hirelings drive;
We hae contentment, and can thrive,

Though laigh our lot may be, Annie.
Nane can blight earth's bonnie flowers,
Veil the sun or stay the showers ;
The birds are free within their bowers
To sing to you and me, Annie.

We winna grudge the great their braws,
Nor a' the gear they hae, Annie ;
Aft fashion, as a canker, gnaws
Kind Nature's heart away, Annie.
Nae wicked wassails shall us pain,
Or taint life's healthy floodin' vein ;
Whae'er the deadly bowl may drain,
'Twill ne'er be you or me, Annie.
Side by side like trees we'll grow,
Smooth as burnies on we'll row ;
Our lives be ae lang lover's vow,
Until the day we dee, Annie.

THE POWER OF TRUTH.

Yon bubbling fountain so obscure,
So small it scarcely owns a source ;
Through tangled wilds makes progress sure,
Till none may dare to stem its force.
So Truth may flow from humblest soul,
Yet swell till river-like it roll.

Yon tiny flower that bursts the clod,
So faint it hardly seems to live ;
Still wrestles up to crown the sod,
And all around sweet incense give.
So Truth at first may feebly spring,
Yet o'er the world its fragrance fling.

Yon helpless nursling born so weak,
It sleeps as if it ne'er might wake—
Enfolds a manhood that shall speak
In tones to make earth's tyrants quake.
So Truth oft lowly, unawares,
To men its angel-message bears.

PRESS ON.

Though chilling years have o'er us rolled,
Warm at our hearts this faith we hold ;
Whate'er may die and be forgot—
Work done for God it dieth hot.

Though scoffers ask, "where is your gain?"
And mocking say "your toil is vain,"

Such scoffers die and are forgot—
Work done for God it dieth not.

Press on, true men can never fail,
Whoe'er oppose, *they* must prevail,
Opponents die and are forgot—
Work done for God it dieth not.

Press on, right on, nor doubt nor fear,
From age to age this faith shall cheer,
Whate'er may die and be forgot—
Work done for God it dieth not.

COME HAME, GUDEMAN.

AIR—"O' a' the airts."

Come hame, gudeman, come hame to me,
Wi' blithe looks o' langsyne;
Ye are the apple o' my e'e,
That I am laith to tine.
For though ye dinna trust me now
As ye were wont to do,
Deep down in this wae heart I feel
A glowing love for you.
And seldom though ye think o' me,
My care for you's the same,
An' a' that's past I'd soon forgie,
Gin ye wad but come hame
An' speak to me as when alane
Ye charmed my maiden ear,
An' made me lang to be your ain,
Wi' words sae sweet, sae dear.

Oh! then I little thocht this day
I'd ever live to see,
When ye wad gang sae far astray—
Forget the bairns and me.
But guil'fu' men, wi' a' their arts,
Hae turned ye to their ways;
They dinna care for broken hearts,
A wife's sad nights and days.
But yet for a' I'll no despair;
To hae ye saved I'm set;
The pangs ye feel are ill to bear;
I ken ye lo'e me yet.
Then come, gudeman, this hour repent,
Come bless the bairns and me:
Oh, when nae mair on drink is spent,
A happy wife I'll be.

OH! WEEL I LO'E JAMIE.

AIR—"There lives a young Lassie."

Oh! weel I lo'e Jamie, sae bonnie and guid,
To me he is dearer and dearer ilk day;
Tho' puir, he has veins fu' o' richt Scottish bluid,
And toils wi' a stout heart to clear his ain way.

Wi' thrift our sma' hame is sae canty and nice;
Nae yill-house nor gill-house can Jamie entice:
He comes to his dearie whene'er the day's dune;
Oh! gladly I meet him, nor think he's ower sune.

Oh! a'body likes when my Jamie they meet,
His heart is sae warm an' his crack sic a treat;
His free, blithsome laughin' gars a' the house ring;
Oh! to mak' him mair happy nae drink ye need bring.
Oh! weel I lo'e Jamie, &c.

Wad a' the warld follow our simple plan through,
Few young folks that's buckled wad e'er need to rue;
True love's sweetest flowers on their pathway wad spring,
And fragrance and beauty round a' thing wad fling.
Oh! weel I lo'e Jamie, &c.

HALE AN' WEEL.

AIR—"Sleeping Maggie."

Hale an' weel I hae been born,
Needing naether drug nor drappie;
Blithe as lark I greet the morn,
Lilting ower my sang sae happy.
Oh, bring nae wine-cup near me;
Oh, bring nae wine-cup near me;
While I can think, nae ither drink
Than yon pure spring I'll tak' to cheer me.

Loudly sing the merry birds,
While the flowers stand round me laughin';
Frae a', I think I hear the words,
"Bonnie dew-draps we've been quaffin'."
Oh, bring nae wine-cup, &c.

As hame again, weel pleased, I gae,
And list to Nature's happy chorus,
Its aye into mysel' I say,
"The nearer her the better for us."
Oh, bring nae wine-cup, &c.

Jean, wi' simples, spreads our board;
Whate'er we hae—we hae nae drappie;
Yet whar's the leddy or the lord,
Wi' their wine-cups, half sae happy?
Oh, bring nae wine-cups near us;
Oh, bring nae wine-cups near us:
While we can think, nae ither drink
Than yon pure spring, we'll tak' to cheer us.

A' THING'S CHANGED THEGITHER.

AIR—"Fee him, Faither."

A' thing's changed thegither, Jamie,
A' thing's changed thegither,
Sin' ye war changed, an' wadna drink
Wi' naether ane nor ither.
In oor big warld ye winna fin
A mair licht-hearted mither,
For aye sin' syne I can but sing—
A' thing's changed thegither, Jamie,
A' thing's changed thegither.

Oor hame, ance black and drearie, Jamie,
Oor hame, ance black an' drearie,
An' cauld an' puir as ony muir,
Is noo baith warm an' cheerie;
Noo brawish folk, who used to mock,
Can ca', and never swither;
At sic respect I inly sing—
A' thing's changed thegither, Jamie,
A' thing's changed thegither.

Noo a' the bairns are cosie, Jamie,
A' the bairns are cosie:
Clad head to feet, ne'er scrimpt o' meat,
They look sae blithe an' rosie.
The music o' their happy glee,
While toozlin' ane anither,
Aye gars my heart brak forth an' sing—
A' thing's changed thegither, Jamie,
A' thing's changed thegither.

The bairns are oor best treasure, Jamie,
The bairns are oor best treasure;
In love they're sent, in love they're lent,
To gie us purest pleasure.
They'll grow frae bein' sproutin' plants
To trees that never wither;
In ither warlds they'll flourish on,
When a' thing's changed thegither, Jamie,
When a' thing's changed thegither.

I STOOD BEFORE A CRAFTSMAN'S DOOR.

I stood before a craftsman's door,
And heard him gaily sing,
Fareweel, my drouthie cronies a'
And a' the ills ye bring.
I'll gang nae mair a rovin',
Sae late into the night;
I'll gang nae mair a rovin',
Tho' wit and sang shine bright;
I'll gang nae mair a rovin'.

Brisk as the sun, that has begun
His day's work in the skies,
Should ilka man do what he can,
'Boon cluds and duds to rise.
I'll gank nae mair, &c.

Sae will I ply, until I die,
A pair o' honest hands;
And live as free as duke can be,
Wi' a hunder mile o' lands.
I'll gang nae mair, &c.

In my wee hoose I'll sit as crouse
As kings in palace ha';
For wi' my Jean, my bonnie queen,
I feel aboon them a',
I'll gang nae mair, &c.

What though o' care we ha'e our share,
While round the warld does spin;
Wha aye do right wi' a' their might,
At last are sure to win.
I'll gang nae mair, &c,

GEORGE A. H. DOUGLAS,

A THOUGHTFUL and versatile writer, both in poetry and prose, was born in "The Vennel," Edinburgh, in 1850. His grandfather possessed rare literary talents, and corresponded with Mr Joseph Hume and other celebrated politicians of the day.

Having attended elementary schools in Edinburgh, George was sent to Dollar Institution to complete his education. Being of a playful disposition he did not occupy a prominent place at school, although in history and arithmetic he stood very high. On leaving Dollar he entered upon his apprenticeship with Messrs Macniven & Cameron, wholesale stationers, Edinburgh, where he remained for thirteen years, during the latter five of which he represented the firm from Shetland to Berwick-on-Tweed. He then opened premises on his own account in Edinburgh, but as this step did not prove a success he gave it up, and acted as traveller to another firm in the same line. On leaving this firm, about five years ago, he began his present business in Glasgow.

While in Edinburgh our poet contributed a number of articles for several newspapers and magazines, under the title of "Edinburgh Gossip," and bearing the pseudonym of "A Knowing Fellow." These were written in a racy, pleasing, and thoughtful style, and were highly valued. During the past seven years, however, business cares have prevented him from writing much for the press, although recently he has appeared in the "Poets' Corner," and also as a writer of several narrative sketches, and articles on Egyptian architecture, &c. Many of his prose productions are full of solid common sense, and bear upon some of the most pressing social questions of our time. As a poet, Mr Douglas writes occasionally with touches of true pathos and warm reflective feeling, and always with a healthy, manly spirit.

"ABIDE WITH ME."

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,"
In accents sweet, with voices full and clear,
Sweet are the blending of harmonious notes,
That fall with wondrous power upon the ear.
They swell through chancel, and echo in the eaves,
And grandly ring within the transept wide—

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,"
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide."

"When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,"
Grandly they sing as only those can sing
Who feel each note and tender sympathy,
Sung as if sung by angels on the wing.

. . . . . .

A weary soul creeps in from frost and cold,
Tired are her steps, from life's ills fain would flee;
But music's power has charmed her in to hear,
And brings the lowly suppliant to her knee.
Felt need of help, for helpers she had none:
Heaven's door seemed closed, a lonely waif was she,
Her broken heart re-echoes back the strain,
"Help of the helpless, O, abide with me!"

"Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day,"
Sung by fair child o'er father's dying bed;
And, oh, what rapture do the words convey!
For doubts and fears like midnight dreams had fled;
Calmly, trustfully, looks he for his Lord;
No more desire for earth—no more to stay;
His voice now blends in the harmonious words,
"Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away."

"Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes!"
Mind, heart, and soul are blended in the cry,
Sung by dear lips, will sing on earth no more,
But which will sing the words within the sky.
The aged form, though racked by inward pain,
Forgets the gloom that all around her lies;
She sees the heavenly shore, and sings again,
"Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies."
Past now the quicksands and the rocky shore,
"Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee,"
Forgot the ills of life and pangs of death,
"In life and death, O Lord, abide with me."

THE STORM.

Oh, the glamour of the moonlight,
Oh, the swaying of the trees,
Oh, the scudding of the cloudlets
Before the driving breeze.

Oh, the ripple of the wavelets,
Oh, the flapping of the sail,
Oh, the drifting from the anchors
Before the driving gale.

Oh, the roaring of the thunder,
Oh, the sweeping of the blast,
Oh, the flashing of the lightning,
And the bending of the mast.

Oh, the roaring of the breakers,
Oh, the beating of the surf,
Oh, the sexton in the belfry,
And the tolling of the curf'.

Oh, the mothers in their cabins,
Oh, the widows on the shore,
Oh, their weeping and their wailing
For faces seen no more.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS BAIRN.

Come under my plaidie, the nicht's dark and eerie,
Sae cauld blaws the wind frae the sheltering fauld ;
The snaw lies knee-deep in the low-lying valleys,
And covers the top o' Ben Nevis so bald.

Come under my plaidie, the nicht's dark and stormy,
The winds they are sabbing, as if in deep pain ;
And dark owre the broos o' the far-away mountains
The thick clouds are gath'ring for storm and for rain.

Come under my plaidie, the storm is descending,
The sheep on the mountain seek sheltering wa' ;
I hear noo the bleat o' the bonnie bit lammies
In answer to soond o' their mithers' lood ca'.

Come under my plaidie, the thunder is rolling,
The lichtning is flashing in lang slanting lines ;
They mak' my heart eerie, I'm footsore and weary,
I wish we were safe in your biggin' and mine.

Come under my plaidie, you're dear to my bosom,
And dearer you are to your mither's kind heart ;
The spring to the summer, the autumn to winter
May change, but oor love can ne'er be apart.

Come under my plaidie, my ain only dearie,
You are a' that is left to your mither and me ;
Your brithers and sisters in cauld grave lie happit
Aneath the dear shade o' an auld willow tree.

Come under my plaidie, I hear oor dog barking,
And far in the distance the blink frae oor cot ;
Your mither, dear bairnie, has lamp in the window,
To guide oor tired steps to oor ain sweet wee spot.

Come under my plaidie, I see oor roof's shingle,
The fire glares and leaps at oor ingleside ;
See, yonder's your mither gazing oot owre the heather,
And wishing her laddie was close at her side.

THE PIRATE SHIP.

(AFTER BRYANT.)

It is morn on the sea, and flooded with sheen
The deep waves are sparkling like emeralds green,
The pale skies are pulsing and flashing with light,
Which seems but God's glory reflected to sight.
Over the waters like a child of the sun,
O see the tall vessel its lone course does run,
And full to the wind she shakes out her broad sail,
And her pennons stream back with force of the gale.
The high winds sweep past her, with whistle and song,
And surges leap up as they bear her along ;
Her sharp bows look up to gaze at the clouds,
And the sailor lad sings his song in the shrouds.
Onward she sweeps like a vision of light,
As fast as the pinions of eagle in flight,
She seems like a bird with her sails flashing white,
As bright as the sun, as fair as its light ;
And who that now sees her careering along,
Can think of the hearts that are bursting with wrong ;
Would think there are prisoners, now battened below,
And think of the tears from their eyelids that flow,
Could think on the morrow, they must walk the dread plank,
Regardless of pity, position or rank.

'Tis night on the sea, and the moon rises high,
And bright stars are shining like gems in the sky,
They shine like the lamps in some spectral scene,
And the ship like a mirage at sunset is seen.
O look on the waves which she just seems to kiss,
And seems not the ship as a vision of bliss,
O seems not the ship as a wisp on the main,
Or oasis of hope on a long desert plain.

. . . . .

Alone on the deep with the prisoners at night,
They take not a thought of time in its flight,
But are thinking of home and visions of song,
And to press some loved hand they earnestly long.
Calmly the mother takes her child to her heart
To tell of its father, from whom she did part,
Both buoyed with a hope soon united they'd be,
How little she dreamt of a death in the sea ;
Who that now watches the ship smoothly gliding
Thinks that to-morrow a heart will be chiding,

Thinks of a father who waits on the bleak shore,
To welcome the wife he will never meet more.
Thus oh, 'tis thus, that we never can know
Half of the troubles in this region of woe,
Nor deem there are watchers on shore and on wave,
To whom hope is a knell, its echo a grave.

'Tis thus with our lives we go smoothly along,
Our smiles are their sunshine, commingled with song,
We hide all our sorrows and fears from the world,
We close up our hearts like a sail that is furled,
While gazers are watching our streamers fly high,
They know not our hearts can but echo a sigh,
To appearance all gladness, all hope, and all joy,
Yet chartered by sorrow and ballast's alloy.
Yes! we wear a false smile to hide our sad tears,
Yet we're freighted with sorrows and darkened with fears,
But the hopes that are blighted the world cannot know,
They are hid like the breakers by ocean's calm flow.

ALICE LEE.

Snowflakes falling, twisting, whirling, driving in my face,
Snowflakes playing, toying, coying, joining in a race;
A boy again, amid my playmates, full of fun and glee,
Racing, chasing one another, like swift hares we flee.
Building castles, building houses, though they were of snow,
Yet we had our battles, seiges—made our faces glow,
And we each had school-girl sweethearts, proud were we as knights,
And we felt as we were warriors fighting for their rights.
Mine she was a lovely creature, fair-haired Alice Lee,
Had those been the days of tournay—bent had been my knee
To receive the crown of honour from the maid of greatest charms,
Given to the valiant victor for brave feats of arms.
These were days of happiness, when I dreamt of wealth and fame,
Dreamt we both would live together, wearing the same name.
Dreams, I dreamt them o'er and o'er,
They were dreams and nothing more.

Summer's sunshine, slanting, shining, stealing o'er the lea,
Summer's scented breezes blowing, beating on sweet Alice Lee,
In summer's scented sweet seclusion walking by the lake,
Promising whate'er betide us, we would ne'er our promise break.
As we walk with hand in hand, stealing o'er the shadow'd land,
Tall trees throw dark shadows o'er the silv'ry pebbly strand,
'Twas the latest walk we took upon that pleasant shore,
We were fated ne'er to meet in this world evermore,
As we walked the future seemed bright with promise for our love,
I was filled with proud ambition, she with hopes above;

I was building giant castles of a future great,
She with love and hope of heaven spoke with eyes elate.
I had hopes that down the future in poetic arts would shine,
The future wore cerulean colours, golden hopes were mine—
But the autumn came with chillness leaving but dead leaves,
And the harvester was busy binding up his sheaves,
And my dreams were blighted, scattered, like the o'er ripe grain,
Leaving nought but wasted fragrance—and my dreams were vain.
Dreams, I dreamt them o'er and o'er,
They were dreams and nothing more.

Snowflakes driving, twisting, whirling, beating on a stone,
Snowflakes playing, coying, toying, in my face are blown,
'Twas the last time I was able to wander to her grave,
But I felt that I must do it ere I crossed dark Lethe's wave,
For sweet Alice died in autumn, ere the red leaves fell,
She had gone among the angels, and the number swell
That surround the throne in glory, and who always cry
"Holy, holy, holy, Lord, to the God that dwells on high."
When I saw the snowflakes falling, covering up the mound
Of her I loved, whose heart was mine, to whom my heart was bound,
I remember how the shadows deepened round my door,
When I knew no more I'd meet her—look on her no more,
And it brought me back the dreams when we walked beside the lake,
Dreaming dreams of love and faith, little dreamt we love would break.
Dreams, we dreamt them o'er and o'er,
They were dreams and nothing more.

J. LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT,

A YOUNG and versatile poet, was born at Granton, near Edinburgh, in 1868. His father was a native of Caithness-shire, and his mother belonged to the Isle of Skye. His mother had a good deal of poetic fire in her veins, several of her "forbears" having been Gaelic poets. She had an extensive knowledge of Gaelic songs and ballads, and his father, too, was an ardent lover of poetry, and was well versed in

old ballad lore. As the great Roman brothers were cradled in a shield and nursed by a wolf, so the subject of the present sketch was cradled in the lap of song, and fed by song itself.

Mr Watt was educated at the High School, Dalkeith. From his earliest boyhood he had a strong desire to be an artist, and he drew many curious "pictures" when he could little more than hold the pencil. His mother encouraged him greatly in all his endeavours, and in course of time he was placed under the care of Mr Sinclair, drawing master at the High School, who was an artist of no small merit. After the death of this teacher, our poet was taught by his widow, a lady of much talent, who gave him lessons in oil painting up to the time he left school in 1882.

While at school he jingled words for his own and his comrades' amusement, and when he entered, in 1883, the office of an Edinburgh accountant, he became connected with a clique of literary young men. He thus continued and strengthened his literary and poetic tastes. He is a frequent contributor to the newspapers and periodicals—his poetical productions giving evidence of considerable imaginative powers, and an ear able to delight itself with the many-toned melody of Nature. His mind is clearly of a reflective order, and some of his pieces are couched in language showing not a little depth of feeling and purity of sentiment.

LIFE—A PRAYER.

Strange as a chiming song of old,
This life of ours,—
Passage of cloud, and gleam, and gold,
Of thorns and flowers.

Life is a page where all must write
Their names each one,
There for a space to fade, like light,
When day is done.

Some, scribbling o'er the lines in haste,
Blot while they write,
While some with care the letters trace,
In beauty bright.

So would I fain inscribe my name
With glowing grace;
So, firm against the floods of shame,
Maintain my place.

Ruler of time, and men, and age,
My prayer I make;
Let me keep pure life's sacred page,
For Thy name's sake.

IN THE GRAVEYARD.

I.

In the evening, while the sunset
Lingers down the golden stair,
And the winds, like whispering angels,
Rustle strangely through the air,
Oh, how sweet to wander slowly,
While the day's glad glories fade,
Through the lonely, slumbering graveyard,
Where our faded ones are laid.

Oh, to think among the gravestones
Of the loved ones passed away—
Those who laughed and romped beside us
In young life's unclouded day;
Oh, to mind each joyous gesture,
When in childhood's glee we strayed;
Oh, the laughs we laughed together,—
Oh, the merry tricks we played.

II.

In the graveyard, in the graveyard,
Is a simple marble stone,
Better far than costly columns,
Where great names in gold are shown;
And I pass some others lightly,
Though they be both great and fair,
But I pause beside that tombstone,
Thinking of the dead one there.

He is sleeping, calmly, softly,
Far across Atlantic's foam;
For he perished in his noontide,
Far from kindred, far from home;

And the tombstone tells the story,
How, in sleep that cannot break,
California's rugged mountains
Keep him till the dead shall wake.

III.

In the graveyard he is sleeping—
He, the gladsome, bright, blue-eyed;
Oh, earth *must* have seemed far darker
When he closed his lids, and died;
And beside him, in her beauty,
Lies the queen of golden curls,
With her eyes for ever quenchèd,
Eyes like gleaming eastern pearls.

Oh, the stories whispered nightly,
How, beneath the deadly shade,
Day by day, so surely, sadly,
Did the fair-haired darling fade;
Till her azure eyes grew dimmer,
As they drooped their sweeping fringe,
Slowly closing, slowly dark'ning,
As the sunset's glorious tinge.

IV.

Where the sun first shines in brightness,
And the first soft shadows fall,
'Neath the ivy-mantled corner
Of the grey and crumbling wall,
Side by side, amid the silence,
Far beneath the living feet,
Two fair nuns are lying resting
From life's burning, battle heat.

Ah! the grief that clouds the faces
Of the peasants poor, who tell
How they helped the sick and needy
Ere the blow of sorrow fell,—
How they faded in the cloister,
'Mong the shadows cold and grey,
Blooming like some flowers, unheeded,
In some valley far away.

V.

Musing sadly in the graveyard,
Scarcely can I feel alone,
For the hills rise blue and beauteous
And I hear the river's moan;
And I conjure up the features
Of a loved one whom I knew,

When my path was ever flowery,
And my sky was ever blue;

And I see his raven ringlets
Clustered darkly round his brow,
Like the dusky cloudlet wreathing
Some fair peak of stainless snow;
Lovely, as when once I saw him,
In his moment of eclipse,
With his black eyes closed for ever,
And a smile upon his lips.

Surely he was early taken,
For the summers scarce had sped
Nineteen times in changing beauty
O'er his noble, shining head;
And when all the winds of winter
Long had ceased to swell and rave,
When the summer woke in gladness,
He was silent in the grave.

Often hath he stooped to pat me
In the days ere health's decline,—
Oh, the glee that lit his features
With a glory half divine!
Now, above him, sadly bending,
As he lieth still and lone,
Oh, how strongly flash across me
Visions of the glory gone!

VI.

Oh, to linger, sighing, dreaming,
'Mong the silent trees and flowers,
Of the old, dead, faded faces,
And the old, dead, happy hours;
Through the long, bright summer sunset,
Thinking of that pilgrim band,
Who, through Death's dark gloomy portal,
Passed, and entered shadow-land.

Oh, the holy, slumbering graveyard!
How its silence seems to tell
Of the silence that is lying
On the lips we loved so well!
How, as in a dream, it bringeth
Every look long passed away—
All the sad and tearful glances,
All the songs so glad and gay.

VII.

They who trod Death's path before us—
  They for whom our teardrops fell,
Are they then for ever silent?
  Have they nothing strange to tell?
Hushed, alas, are all the voices
  That were wont to ring with glee,
And the bones of those who loved us
  Scattered wide o'er land and sea.

But a morn shall dawn in beauty,
  Through yon distant eastern skies,
And a voice shall break the stillness,
  Calling all the dead to rise;
Then with gleaming feet upspringing
  Shall we cleave the whispering Heaven,
And shall meet, 'mid endless anthems,
  Those from whom our hearts were riven.

GOUROCK BAY.

I'm sitting sad and lonely,
  But my thoughts are far away—
Dwell where I myself have dwelt,
  By bonnie Gourock Bay.

I love the great dark mountains,
  For I knew each rugged crest;
I love the rolling stretch of waves,
  The water's wild unrest.

I almost knew each ripple,
  Each feature of the tide;
Each stone and pebble on the shore,
  Each dimple on the Clyde.

Oh! heaving waves of ocean,
  That stretch your arms to grasp
What never may be yours! oh weeds,
  The rocks and crags that clasp.

What thrilling fearful pictures
  Of peril could ye show,
Of wrecks and death—o'er dead men's bones
  Your gay gleams come and go.

Oh, crimson glowing sunsets,
  Oh, mighty rushing Clyde,
Oh, purple mountains of Argyll,
  Oh, ebbing flowing tide.

I long for all your beauties,
And pensive now must stray
Far from the place that fills my heart—
Oh, bonnie Gourock Bay.

WHERE BRACKENS GROW.

When summer gladdens all the plain,
And clothes the forest grove,
And wakes the linnet's tuneful strain,
'Tis sweet to musing rove
O'er heathery hills, through rustling dells,
Where bonnie blue-bells blow,
Or rest in shady leafy cells,
Where brackens grow.

The wildwood is my fairy hall,
And, by some purling stream,
Where quivering shadows flit and fall,
I love to lie and dream;
To dream of regions brighter far
Than this dark cave of tears,
Beyond the furthest dimmest star,
Where mystery clears.

The dreary town, with all its din,
Is hateful to my heart;
I hate the endless shameless sin,
I hate the busy mart;
If, while the weary moments roll,
One wild flower catch my eye,
Sweet forest scenes flash o'er my soul,
And make me sigh.

Where'er my foot may chance to stray,
Where'er my tongue may name,
Each glittering stream, each bonnie brae,
Still keeps my heart the same;
Still pine I for the rustling dells,
Where bonnie blue-bells blow;
Still long for all the shady cells,
Where brackens grow.

JAMES TOD,

ALTHOUGH it is over thirty years since this young poet passed away, during which time his literary remains have been distinguished by nothing more public than the mere credit of a corner in several newspapers, he is nevertheless worthy of a place in our galaxy. His poetical productions, it is true, are not numerous, and some of them are necessarily immature, but still their merits are such as justify their being preserved in a more permanent form.

James Tod was born in Edinburgh in 1833. On leaving school he assisted his father, who was a master-painter in that city, in the counting-house department of the business. Being naturally of a literary habit of mind, much of his leisure was devoted to poetical and essay compositions. In this he was actively engaged when his health gave way. A change was considered advisable, and he was ordered abroad; but while making the necessary preparations for the voyage, his illness assumed an aggravated form, and he died in 1855, in his twenty-second year.

From the specimens we submit, it will be apparent that, had the subject of our sketch lived, he would certainly have accomplished, in a literary sense, more than his brief career enabled him to do. The poems, essays, and sketches, which his friends with praiseworthy regard have preserved, evince true poetic instinct. Pure, devout, albeit somewhat serious cast of thought, combined with striking expressiveness of language, is the dominant feature of his poetry; and one is constrained to regret that his life-career was so brief, and his life-work, in the matter of literary results, so incomplete. However, many will now feel grateful to his friends for affording us the opportunity of numbering him among the choristers of Scottish song.

THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

The morning comes, the night is fast declining,
Old Error's throne is tottering to its fall;
Hope now for man a brighter wreath is twining,
The sun is rising that shall lighten all.
Such are the words that promise for the morrow
A glorious time on this our groaning earth;
Such are the thoughts that raise the heart from sorrow,
And to bright dreams of bliss and joy give birth.

Most blessed truths which poets have been spreading
In strains of wild, prophetic, rapturous song—
Truths which man's soul in silence have been reaching,
And now they burst in action great and strong.
Truth shall prevail; before its presence Error,
Like a lost felon, blushing, slinks away;
Its very name is a most powerful terror,
That drives dark spirits from the face of day.

It glads my heart to view these friendly faces
That smile around the festive board to-night—
Youths whose high souls are girt with many graces,
Suffused in radiant beams of living light—
Knit with a tie most beautiful and holy,
Leagued in a toil of pleasure and of joy,
Bound to forsake all trifling and all folly,
And value knowledge as their best employ.

We, too, are bound to aid the truth's dominion,
And stoutly fight 'gainst tyranny and wrong;
We, too, can help to spread a great opinion,
And wield the weapons that to truth belong.
Woe be to him—God in His Word declareth—
Who useth not his talent though but one;
Woe be to us the record plainly beareth,
If we have work and leave that work undone.

And what a work for each true heart endeavour
Is in this fallen, wretched world of ours!
For Sin's vile hand hath dimmed its former splendour,
And cast a blight on all its heavenly powers.
Who talks of rest, who thinks of idly sleeping,
When half a world is sunk in woeful gloom?
Arise and work, there's rest enough in keeping
Where death is lost down in the silent tomb.

Go through the lanes of this o'ercrowded city,
Where fell disease lurks in the thick-pent air;
Where victims die bereft of aid or pity,
Where hope ne'er comes with visage mild and fair,
Where vice and sin the untaught mind hath blighted,
Where vicious passions reign without control,

And not a ray hath ever pierced or lighted,
The awful cloud that wraps each darkened soul.

These men and women with pale, haggard features,
Load the thick air with curses loud and deep;
In wretched dens, poor lost and fallen creatures,
Wail their sad doom and all unheeded weep.
Despise them not, nor taunt them with wrong-doing,
But whisper words of comfort in their ears,
Strive still to guide them from the path of ruin,
Quell all their doubts and banish all their fears.

Of truth and knowledge ope the burning pages,
And flood their minds with streams of glorious light,
With thoughts of God-like and immortal sages,
With thoughts of poets clad in visions bright.
And labouring thus, attended by God's blessing—
That gentle dew that droppeth from above,
Without whose aid our efforts all were missing—
We shall advance the reign of peace and love.

That happy time, when no lone heart shall wither
Beneath the blight of poverty and care,
When men shall live in peace and joy together,
And earth shall blossom like a garden fair—
That blessed time, when woe, and pain, and sorrow,
With error, doubt, and fear, shall pass away;
And truth, love, peace, shall usher in the morrow,
And bind all hearts in their resistless sway.

THE DRUNKARD'S FUNERAL.

See yonder coffin careless borne
Into the tangled, lone churchyard;
No dark procession follows,—not a friend
To shed one tear of sorrow ere it be
Consigned to its last resting place, or ere
Dust to its parent dust return. In haste,
With little ceremony, it is earthed up.
The turf is laid, the saddening work is done;
And slow retire the minions of the grave,
With countenance unmoved, and with hearts
Untouched as before, ready to bring
Some other of death's victims, whereon may gloat
The wide and ever-ravening jaws of her they serve.

They are gone—
But who is he that sleeps beneath this sod,
Whose funeral has no mourner; on whose grave
No kindly drops of sorrow fell; where none
With friendly hand shall train the tender flowers,
Emblems of hope and heaven?

Come back with me to a fair summer's morn
Some forty years ago; the trees are green,
The flowers in fairest blossom, the merry lark
Is trilling high o'erhead his master hymn;
In yonder daised mead a laughing child
Plays with a lamb, and round its snowy neck
Twines garlands fair. A lovely picture these
Of spotless innocence.
A score of years are fled; the playful child
Is now an ardent youth of noble mind
Full of high aspirations and bright hopes,
Sweet poetry and romance.

See where he wanders now,
By the clear glistering rill beneath the shade
Of the tall whispering trees, with yon fair girl
Pouring the impassioned strains of youthful love
Into her ravished ears.
A few more years are come and gone,
And that same child, that ardent youth, is now
The thoughtful man. The brightly radiant dreams
Of other years are fled; but as he sees
His joyous bright eyed children play around,
While she, his faithful partner, and his heart's
First love, looks on with sunny smiles—
He in his bosom feels a calm, a holy joy,
And his devout and thankful soul is raised
In gratitude to heaven.

But oh! into that pleasant smiling home
An evil power had sought, and, seeking, gained
An entrance. Hell there, with spiteful hand
Has sown an evil seed that soon will up
In quick and awful growth. Aye, in that bowl
Of rosy sparkling wine, a serpent lurks
That soon will show its sharp envenomed sting
Of misery, ruin, and death.

Come enter next
A wretched hovel, the abode
Of misery and disease; and stretched there
Upon a lowly couch, behold a pallid wretch
Death holds him in his iron grasp and laughs
At his vain struggles.

Mark him now
While conscience summons to his bed
The image of his once loved wife, who died
Broken in heart many long years ago.
His outcast children, too, friendless wanderers
In the wide world, all, all stand round,

Fuel adding to the fire of scorching flame
That burns within him.

Heard ye that groan,
Another shriek, fraught with despair,
And his soul, naked, stands before its God,
Deep seared with horrid vice and foulest crime.

Look yonder in his grave,
An angel stands thereon, and in
A voice of thunder, warning, speaks to me,
To you, to all, bids us eschew
Hell's deadliest poison ; bids beware
The drunkard's maddening bowl—the
Drunkard's awful doom.

LOVE.

Love ! glorious theme, most pure, most grand, and holy !
How shall I dare thy lofty praise to sing ?
How shall a youth whose heart is filled with folly,
Presume to earth his earthly robes to fling,
And with untutored hand and rash desire
To kneel within the courts of poesy,
And crave for leave t' attune the burning lyre
To love's most solemn, sacred, harmony ?

Say how shall he whom fortune never favoured,
Debarred from learning's great enlightening store,
Who ne'er in learning's honoured haunts hath pondered
O'er the quaint tomes of deep and ancient lore—
How shall he gaze with weak and mortal eyesight
Upon the wonders of this mystery ?
And pierce the cloud of dim and misty twilight,
That veils the glory of its radiancy.

Yes ; it is true ! my guise and speech declare
Swarth labour claims me for a trusty son,
Amid his numerous works allots my share
From day to day ; from morn till setting sun.
But surely labour hath not ruined and wasted
Life's sinless joys with vile malignant power,
And even I, perchance, may cull unblasted,
Mean as I am, some fair and fragrant flower.

Love is the manna God rains down from heaven,
Sufficient store for earth's fast fleeting day ;
But men, by evil thoughts and passions driven,
From angels' food with loathing turn away,
They heedless rush into life's deserts dreary.
They gather snakes and stones in place of bread,

And their unnourished souls, all faint and weary,
Grow stiff and cold, emotionless and dead.

Love is the spirit of all earthly beauty,
The hidden fountain of all earthly good ;
It is a higher guide than niggard duty ;
It is the bond of real brotherhood.
'Tis love that finds in every man a brother,
Whatever be his rank, or place of birth,
That teaches of the one great loving Father,
The God of heaven, the Ruler of the earth.

Love hath no bounds, it entereth palaces,
Where crowned heads in pomp and grandeur wait :
It feareth not to dwell in wretched places,
Mid honest worth the sport of adverse fate.
The prisoner sunk in gloomy cell it cheereth ;
It waketh hope when hope is like to die ;
And to the errant Ishmaelite appeareth,
Who sleeps beneath the curtains of the sky.

'Tis love that to the patriot's heart is lending
Strength to uphold his country's rights and laws ;
That fires his soul when, in the strife contending,
He wields a weapon in his country's cause.
'Tis love, all powerful and sustaining,
That 'mid the flames calms all the martyr's fears,
That breathes from forth his inmost soul when praying,
Even for a blessing on his murderers.

'Twas love that, in the councils of the holiest,
Devised the scheme of heavenly grace sublime,
Sent Christ on earth, the lowliest of the lowliest,
Proclaiming to the bound the glad accepted time,
Joy to the sad, to the afflicted healing,
Life to the dead, light to the darkened eyes—
Giving himself a pure and spotless offering
To guilt and sin, a sinless sacrifice.

REV. WILLIAM BLAIR, D.D.,

THE highly esteemed minister of the U.P. congregation of Dunblane, was born at Clunie, in the parish of Kinglassie, and after acquiring the rudiments of his education at a rural school, he attended the parish school of Auchterderran, and latterly Mr Wilson's seminary at Pathhead. The boy, in his case, was father to the man. The quick perception and keen sensibility for which he is noted appeared in his childhood, in proof of which we give a short extract from one of his productions, entitled "Rambling Recollections," in which he gives a graphic account of his first visit to Kirkcaldy :—

"Accustomed as we were to hamlet life in the country, with trees in the woods instead of houses, and dykes and fences instead of streets, what was our wonderment on being transported one day to see a town. How many strange fancies were conjured up in anticipation of the sight, how many indescribable feelings came and went after we had made our first visit. It was a sweet Sabbath morning when we set out from our quiet home. The reflected light of that summer Sabbath day still fills the pictured chamber of memory, and gilds with its golden lustre the framework of these visions of youth. Led by a sister's hand we made the long journey of a few miles in the soft morning sunshine. . . . On reaching the farmsteading of Sauchenbush, which overlooks Kirkcaldy, we quaked for very surprise and admiration. The deep blue sea of the Firth of Forth blending with the blue bending sky had deceived us into the belief that it was all horizon on which we were looking. The white sails that skimmed the waters seemed to be lifted up into the air. We had for the first time in our lives seen the sea. It was a sight once seen never

to be forgotten. We hastened as fast as our little feet could proceed in the direction of the town."

The intense enthusiasm and deep and abiding impression which that sight made upon the child revealed the poetic nature which was implanted within him, and it would be well if parents had the skill to detect and to develope the native tendencies of their offspring, for there is a marked diversity of gifts in the children of the same family, and in every family. For want of this discrimination many young people, and, we fear, very many, are thrown into positions for which Nature has not fitted them.

In 1846 Dr Blair entered the University of St Andrews with the avowed intention of becoming a minister of the United Presbyterian Church. He distinguished himself as a student of apt talent and marked industry, and graduated as Master of Arts in 1850. Subsequently he attended the Divinity Hall of the United Presbyterian Church, and in addition took a session of theology under Principal Cunningham and Dr Robert Lee, and was licensed to preach the Gospel by the U.P. Presbytery of Kirkcaldy in 1854. His pulpit gifts, which are of a high and attractive order, were speedily appreciated, and ere long he received a call to Whitby, in England, and another to Dunblane. He chose the latter, and was ordained as minister there on the 16th April, 1856, where he has since laboured assiduously and acceptably to an attached congregation.

As a student and a minister his mind has all along been in unceasing activity. Its prominent features are fertility, versatility, and facility. While a student he published "The Chronicles of Aberbrothock," a work of considerable extent, consisting of traditionary fragments, &c. In 1857 "Rambling Recollections" appeared, and in 1860 "The Prince of Preachers," a sermon and a short biographical sketch of the late Dr Fletcher, of London; and in 1861 an interesting

account of a tour he made through France, Switzerland, and Italy, and of the Evangelical Alliance which met in Geneva. In 1873 he edited "M'Kelvie's Annals and Statistics of the U.P. Church," an onerous and laborious work which stretched over four years, and in 1883 he published "Selections from Archbishop Leighton, with Notes and Biography." This last work is a masterpiece. We know no work of its kind, within the same compass, of equal merit. It is succinct, and yet fluent and full of research and erudition—a work which only an ardent and accomplished enthusiast of the prelate could have produced.

In addition to the books we have named, Dr Blair has contributed a very large number of articles to biographical dictionaries, newspapers, magazines and reviews. All this has been done in the midst of his official labours, and as Clerk to his Presbytery, and in the discharge of the wearing duties of the numerous Church Committees with which he has all along been connected, and in taking a prominent part in all the social and political questions of the day.

In 1879 the University of St Andrews conferred upon him the degree of D.D.; in 1884 he was elected as one of the Clerks of the U.P. Synod, and he has held commission as Chaplain of the local volunteers for twenty-one years. In the midst of such multifarious labours it is matter of wonder that any time was left for music, of which he is an adept, and for the Muses, to which he occasionally pays homage. Few of his pieces have appeared in print, but it is rumoured that his desk has its secret stores. Whether this be so or not, his prose betrays the poet, for prose has its poetry as well as verse.

We append the following pieces which have fallen in our way, for as yet the author has not published his poems in a collected form. They evince a deep love for the beautiful and picturesque in Nature, with touches of humour and pathos running through them.

The poem entitled "The Grey Old Man" was read by the author at the centenary celebration of the South U.P. Church, Auchterarder, of which the venerable and talented Rev. George Jacque, whose jubilee was recently observed, is the well-known and widely-esteemed pastor. Mr Jacque was sketched in our Third Series, and we are indebted to him for the foregoing particulars.

THE BISHOP'S WELL.

O bonnie are the Laighill Braes,
Where we hae rowed in youthfu' days,
'Mang cowes o' broom wi' yellow blaze,
A gleam o' gowden beauty!
O bonnie is the Laighill Burn
That jinks and jouks in mony a turn,
While rashes green the banks adorn,
And wildflowers deck the haugh o't.

O bonnie is the Laighill Well,
That pours its spring adown the dell,
A mirror to your bonnie sel',
An' auld Dunblane that drinks it.
O bonnie is the Allan stream
That dashes by wi' siller gleam
Where grew that flower, the poet's theme,
"On Banks o' Allan Water."

O bonnie is the Bishop's Green,
The Bishop's Walk and Well between—
Nae greener sward was ever seen
Than haps the Hainin' Grass-yard!
Where yon auld hawthorns spread their spray
To scent the air in bonnie May,
A crystal fount sends out its ray
Like starnie in the welkin.

That e'e that lifts its glance sae keen
Up to the clouds frae oot the green,
An' shimmers wi' its crystal sheen—
The Bishop's Well's the name o't.
It saired the saints and monks of old,
An' lords an' lairds fu' stout an' bold—
Its virtues canna weel be told—
'Twas meat and drink to puir folk.

When Lichton filled the Bishop's See
Nae stronger drink ava had he;

To mak' his kail or wee drap tea,
The Bishop's Well best pleased him.
What time he sauntered by himsel'
Ayont the Bishop's Walk, they tell
Fu' oft he gazed into the well,
An' aye he drank a drap o't.

When lads an' lasses plight their troth,
An' heart frae heart to pairt is loth,
They tak', for vow an' solemn oath,
The Bishop's Well to bind them.
Twa hearts are loupin' fast an' fell,
Twa souls are tethered wi' a spell,
Gude angels gather at the Well
An' flap their wings aboot them.

Now many years hae come an' gane
Since wives an' mothers o' Dunblane
The roadie to the Well hae ta'en
When blinks the e'e o' morning.
While yellow-fins in Allan soom,
Or Laighills wave wi' yellow broom,
May flowers, like Jessie, sweetly bloom
The Bishop's Well adorning.

GOLDEN GORSE.

Golden gorse, whose stately plume
Waves o'er moorland, crag, and fells
Nods amid the yellow broom,
Bramble-bank and bracken dells,
Where the hip and hawthorn spray
Twine their arms across the brook,
Where the wild-rose skirts the way,
There thou hast thy cosy nook.

Golden gorse that gaily gleams
O'er the upland and the dale,
As a royal banner streams
In the freshening summer gale;
Heedless, thou, of winter's fang,
When the timid snowdrops ope,
Dost thy golden tassels hang,
Tokens true of love and hope.

Golden gorse that gems the wold
As with splendours of the mine,
Blazoned "floor of cloth of gold"—
Such thy golden spangles shine;
"Burning bush, yet unconsumed,"
Voice of God with tongue of fire,

Horeb's hill its light illumed,
Baleful flame, a portent dire.

Golden gorse, in summer pride,
Rolling like the billowy main,
When the golden even-tide
Pours it flood athwart the plain;
Lo, the fabled gardens rise,
The Hesperides of old—
Golden fleece, the Argo's prize,
Or Mida's touch that makes all gold.

Golden gorse, with prickly flower,
Where the linnet makes her nest,
Sheltered in her sunny bower,
Foe nor fear may her molest;
Happy bird, with bower so gay,
Roofed with gold, and fenced with thorn,
Piping love-notes all the day,
Fanned with fragrance till the morn.

HYMN.

From "Presbyterian Hymnal for the Young."

Jesus, Saviour, Shepherd bringing
Home with joy Thy wandering sheep!
May we all Thy praises singing
Give Thee now our souls to keep.

Jesus, Savour, high and holy,
Bend in mercy from Thy throne!
Touch our hearts and make them lowly,
Meek and gentle as Thine own.

Jesus, Saviour, strong and tender,
Draw and keep us near Thy side!
From all ill be our Defender,
In all gloom be Thou our Guide.

Jesus, Saviour, Friend abiding
When all other friends depart!
Let Thy bosom be our hiding,
And our resting place Thy heart.

JAMIE AFFLECK.

What a puir feckless body is Jamie Affleck!
In the Brigend o' Dunblane
He bides doon a lang lane
In an auld clay biggin' that's tumblin' to wreck.

What a drochie bit craetur is Jamie Affleck
He's donnard and maist daft,
An' his brains are sae saft
That his mouth gapes ajar like a door aff the sneck

What a clean gyted gomeral is Jamie Affleck!
He's splayed in baith feet,
As he rows up the street
Gin he was a sailor slow pacing his deck.

What sma' een and big cheeks has Jamie Affleck!
His ain tale he can tell,
Hoo his auld Aunty Bell
O' brose meal provides him wi' mony a peck.

What a rough gurlin' voice has Jamie Affleck!
"If ye've pennies to spare,
Sir, I'd like twa or mair"—
Is Jamie's petition while making his beck.

What's the chief end o' life to Jamie Affleck?
If you gi'e him a groat,
Or a cast-off old coat,
Not of things low or high will Jamie e'er reck.

THE AULD SCHULE.

In the days o' langsyne the schules o' Dunblane
Were the temples o' faith and the cradles o' knowledge,
When oor steeple was biggit wi' gude lime and stane,
By the hands o' the Culdees, alangside their College.

What spell-books were read or lessons were said
Nae chronicle tells us frae oot its dim pages;
But we doubtna that mony bricht students were made
In yon Culdee College far ben the dark ages.

In days nearer hand, o' the schule we've heard tell,
An' maisters that ruled wi' gude godly laws,
When auld Robin Lichton was Bishop himsel',
And ane Robert Caddell was knicht o' the tawse.

Oor maisters in thae days keepit the schule
At the muckle kirk back, in the laigh chapter hoosie;
'Twas a dungeon o' learning, a vault dark and dool,
A bit hole in the wa' like the nest o' a moosie.

Sair changed is the place noo, in winnock and door,
The ribs o' the roof an' the carved stane bosses
Are a' scrubbit clean, like a washed kitchen floor,
To blaw aff the mould, the mouse-webs, and mosses,

Yet though oor auld schule has seen transformation,
And noo maks a kirk or cloister fu braw ;
The names o' auld scholars shine thro' restoration,
Howkit round in the pillars that haud up the wa'.

O' the neist parish schule, whae'er doesna mind ?
Benorth the Cathedral, a crouse, stieve auld biggin',
Just twa'rthree staps doon the Meetin'-Hoose Wynd,
At the cheek o' the garden it showed its blue riggin'.

The roof o't was laigh an' fu' green damp the wa',
The lozzens were dim like the een o' auld age ;
But the kind licht o' lear shone roond on us a'
Frae the lamp held sae hie by Donald the sage.

But its lang sin' the auld schule ceased its vocation,
Noo volunteers drill whar we sat side by side ;
An' fates forewarn us that soon devastation
Will sweep schule and scholars adown its dark tide.

THE GREY OLD MAN.

Grey Old Man, with shoulders downward bending
Beneath the burden of a hundred years,
With scrip and staff, like pilgrim slowly wending,
Adown the pathway of this vale of tears ;
Rare memories of the past, or good or ill,
You can disclose, if you but have the will,—
Dear, grey old man.

What jocund groups surround the blazing ingle
When winter snows lie deep along the way,
And age and youth in simple pastimes mingle
To while the lazy hours in tale or lay ;
In dear old Scotia's homesteads far and wide,
Her grace and strength, the pillars of her pride,—
Tell, grey old man.

In freedom's cause what hearts, with dauntless daring,
Beat high and strong to guard her hallowed shrine,
Who nobly bore the brunt of battle, sharing
In Christ's reproach, that Gospel light might shine ;
With faith invincible and hopes sublime,
Meet to be ranked with martyrs of old time,—
Say, grey old man.

Who, in the dark and cloudy day, uptaking
The banner, torn and trampled in the dust,
Which Zion's watchmen, sacred rights forsaking,
Abjured,—who then proved steadfast to their trust,
And in the deadly breach unfriended stood

With hearts of steel, resisting unto blood,—
Name, grey old man.

The noble seed, fruit of Messiah's travail,
Heirs of His crown, and children of His grace,
The valiant band in conflict once with evil,
Who now in glory see him face to face;
Thrice have the generations changed their place
Since thou wast numbered with that royal race,—
Brave, grey old man.

Grey old man, yet young, and fresh, and tender,
Nor dim thine eye, nor lessened yet thy force,
Of truth and right be thou the leal defender,
As time still onward rolls its ceaseless course;
In this thy might go on, till next centennial,
Blessings dispensing purest and perennial,—
Good, grey old man.

REV. GEORGE MATHESON, D.D.

THIS talented, widely-known, and much-esteemed minister was born at Glasgow in 1842, and was educated at the Academy and the University of that town. We learn from "Men of the Time" that he lost his sight in youth; but, in spite of this affliction, he studied for the ministry, and took a leading place in classics, philosophy, and theology. He carried off the first prize in the senior division of logic, and the prize essay for the best specimen of Socratic dialogue in 1860, took the first prize for Moral Philosophy in 1861, graduated M.A. with honours in Philosophy in 1862, and B.D. in 1866. He was licensed to the ministry of the Church of Scotland in 1866, was appointed assistant to Dr Macduff, of Sandyford Church, Glasgow, in 1867, and chosen by popular election parish minister of Innellan in 1868; received in 1880 an unanimous call to succeed Dr Cumming, of London, but declined

it. During the present year (1886), however, he was translated to the parish of St Bernard's, Edinburgh. In 1879 the University of Edinburgh conferred on the subject of our sketch the degree of D.D. He was appointed Baird Lecturer for 1881, and one of the St Giles' Lecturers for 1882.

Dr Matheson is the author of several important theological works, and is an occasional contributor, both of prose and poetry, to several of our best known magazines, including the *Contemporary*, *British Quarterly*, *Interpreter*, *Expositor*, *Good Words*, *Sunday Magazine*, &c. He also contributed to the revised edition (1885) of the "Scottish Hymnal." In 1874 he published "Aids to the Study of German Theology;" in 1877, "Growth of the Spirit of Christianity," in two volumes; in 1881, "Natural Elements of Revealed Theology" (Baird Lecture); in 1882, "Confucianism" (in volume of St Giles' Lectures, "Faiths of the World,") and a devotional volume entitled "My Aspirations." Another devotional work, "Moments on the Mount," appeared in 1884, and in the same year was published a paper on "The Religious Bearings of the Doctrine of Evolution," which he had delivered at the Pan-Presbyterian Council, Belfast, and which was issued in its transactions; while in 1885 he published a work on the problem of evolution and revelation, entitled "Can the Old Faith Live with the New?"

It will thus be evident that while Dr Matheson has proved himself to be eminently efficient in his pulpit ministrations—a fascinating, and intensely earnest preacher, the most cultured ear being delighted with the purity of the language used, while the uninformed are equally pleased with the simplicity of the preacher's words—his numerous works, sent out in close succession, prove him also a ripe scholar and laborious student. And when his blindness is taken into account, his career certainly presents an admir-

able incentive to young men to develop what is in them by labour, for quite as much by example as by precept does he enforce the lesson of self-dependence. It will not surprise any one to learn that his mind occasionally inclines to poetic composition. The specimens we submit are rich in evangelical sentiment and true poetical feeling. They are evidently the conceptions of a highly accomplished and devout mind, and are full of sound and vigorous piety, and warm scriptural sentiment.

THE NATIVITY.

The heaven and earth are meeting,
The day and dark are greeting,
For God Himself in splendour has filled the sunless sky,
And all the plains are ringing
With angel voices singing,
"Peace to the lowly hearted; glory to God most high."

O shepherds, worn and weary,
The night no more is dreary,
Your watch hath been surprised by unexpected day;
Unheralded by warning
Breaks out the midnight morning,
And all the startled shadows in terror flee away.

Blest morning of God's pity,
Let down from that fair City
That needeth not the sun to be its noonday light;
Before thy golden portals
We mortals stand immortals,
And longing fades in wonder, and faith is lost in sight.

Hear, all ye sons of sadness,
The tidings of great gladness
That stir the sleeping valleys, that hush the wakerife seas,
To you in Bethlehem's manger
Is born the heavenly Stranger
For whom the anxious world waiteth on bended knees.

Nature hath heard the story,
And sent a star of glory
To pay her meed of tribute to Him that wears her crown;
Wisdom, from all the ages,
Hath singled out her sages
Before his infant feet to lay proud reason down.

O Child of beauty golden,
Young 'mid the nations olden,

Earth kindles at Thy morning her days of youth long set,
And hearts that seemed to wither
Burst into bloom together
Beneath the sunlit hope that waits Thy Olivet.

O LOVE THAT WILT NOT LET ME GO.

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee,
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean-depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee,
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee,
I climb the rainbow in the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee,
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

MY VOICE SHALT THOU HEAR IN THE MORNING.

My voice shalt Thou hear this morning,
For the shades have passed away,
And out from the dark like a joyous lark
My heart soars up with the day;
And its burden all is blessing,
And its accents all are song;
For Thou hast refreshed its slumbers,
And Thy strength hath made it strong.

My voice shalt Thou hear this morning,
For the day is all unknown;
And I am afraid without Thine aid
To travel its hours alone.
Give me Thy light to lead me,
Give me Thy hand to guide,
Give me Thy living presence,
To journey side by side,

Star of eternal morning,
Sun that can ne'er decline,
Day that is bright with unfading light,
Ever above me shine.
For the night shall all be noontide,
And the clouds shall vanish far,
When my path of life is gilded
By the Bright and Morning Star.

THE WINGS OF THE MORNING.

On the wings of the outspread morning
My heart ascends to Thee!
And its darkness melts in the sunlight,
And its burden drops in the sea;
And its song is untouched by sadness,
For its cares are cast away,
And it hopes for a boundless treasure
In the gifts of the coming day.

On the wings of the outspread morning
Let me reach Thy golden light!
To know my path with Thy knowledge,
To see my way with Thy sight:
For without Thy light to lead me
I shall choose my gifts in vain,
And the glitter of earth shall be dearer
Than the life of Thy cross of pain.

On the wings of the outspread morning
Let there enter into my soul
The sigh of the hearts that are heavy,
The sound of the waves that roll!
Let them enter and stir my spirit
With the burden of griefs not mine,
To bear on the wings of the morning
Its message of love divine.

TO-DAY, IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE.

From the sunshine of Thy dwelling
Thou hast sent me this new day,
Laden with Thy love excelling,
Tidings of Thy glory telling,
To refresh my way.

Good and perfect gifts are lying
Wrapped within its folds of light,
Pledges of a faith undying
That earth's sorrow and its sighing
Will but last a night.

Solemn is this day descending
From the fulness of Thy years,
With my past and future blending,
New life opening, old life ending,—
Born 'mid smiles and tears.

Shall it bring my footsteps nearer
To the Light above the sun?
Will it show my pathway clearer,
Will it prove Thy presence dearer,
Ere its course be run?

May I feel that Presence guiding
All its moments, every hour!
Through its shadows never hiding,
'Mid its errors gently chiding,
'Neath its changes still abiding,
Making weakness power.

THEY THAT WAIT UPON THE LORD.

Lord, at Thy feet my prostrate heart is lying,
Worn with the burden weary of the way,
The world's proud sunshine on the hills is dying,
And morning's promise fades with parting day;
Yet in Thy light another morn is breaking,
Of fairer promise, and with pledge more true;
And in Thy life a dawn of youth is waking
Whose bounding pulses shall this heart renew.

Oh, to go back across the years long vanished,
To have the words unsaid, the deeds undone,
The errors cancelled, the deep shadows banished,
In the glad sense of a new world begun!
To be a little child, whose page of story
Is yet undimmed, unblotted by a stain,
And in the sunrise of primeval glory
To know that life has had its start again.

I may go back across the years long vanished,
I may resume my childhood, Lord, in Thee,
When in the shadow of Thy cross are banished
All other shadows that encompass me:
And o'er the road that now is dark and dreary
This soul, made buoyant by the strength of rest,
Shall walk untired, shall run, and not be weary,
To bear the blessing that has made it blest.

ALEXANDER STEWART GRAHAM

WAS born in 1863 at the Scotston, near Brechin, and within the private grounds of the Earl of Southesk, Kinnaird Castle. At a very early age he was engaged as a message boy to a merchant in Dundee, and at present he follows the grocery business in Edinburgh. He is an occasional contributor both of poetry and prose to several weekly newspapers and literary journals. He has depicted in pleasant flowing verse the beautiful surroundings of his early home, and all his productions evince a keen eye for the beauties of Nature, and a sensitive and poetic ear for the music of the woods.

JEANNIE M'NEE.

Low doon in the hallow, 'mang bluebells an' gowans
That dot wi' the daisies the saft mossy lea,
Doon 'neath the auld tree wi' its bonnie ripe rowans,
Stands the thatch-theekit hame o' sweet Jeannie M'Nee.

Nae faither has Jeannie, nae kind lovin' mither,
An' whiles as she thinks o't a tear dims her e'e,
But fondly she clings to her warm-hearted brither,
And fondly he loves her, fair Jeannie M'Nee.

O, winsome is Jeannie, her cheeks red an' rosy,
Her bonnie blue een like the blue o' the sea—
Her voice aye sae cheery, her smile aye sae cosy,
Baith artless and guileless is Jeannie M'Nee.

Ae sweet summer evenin', when hameward a roamin',
"A wolf in sheep's cleedin'" she met on the lea;
Wi' saft wirds he won her, an' there i' the gloamin'
He promised to cherish sweet Jeannie M'Nee.

Ilk nicht there they trysted—puir Jeannie enchanted
Wi' joy, O hoo quickly the lang days did flee;
Her laddie wis a' that she cared for or wantit;
O, sadly deceived was puir Jeannie M'Nee.

Like sweet glint o' sunshine sped past that bricht summer,
An' autumn cam' roond wi' its gowd for the lea,
An' ower Jeannie's life shed a cauld shady glimmer—
Cauld sorrow it brought to young Jeannie M'Nee.

Low doon in the hallow, sae cauld noo an' dreary,
A lady stands waitin', a tear dims her e'e,
An' aften she sighs, gazin' wistfu' an' weary,
Awaitin' the comin' o' Jeannie M'Nee.

An' Jeannie cam' doon to her tryst saftly singin',
But, O, in that sweet sang there seemed little glee;
O, dowie the story; her hands wildly wringin'—
"His wife! O, God help me," cried Jeannie M'Nee.

Far up the wild muirland 'mang whins an' 'mang heather,
The loch spreads it waters, a dark silent sea,
An' there, cauld an' lifeless, her hands clasped together,
They found the puir lassie, lost Jeannie M'Nee.

Low doon in the hallow at peace noo she's sleepin';
An' Heaven will surely her failin's forgi'e!
O, yes, we will hope that she's safe in His keepin';
For sad is the story of Jeannie M'Nee.

MORNING.

The gentle breeze the rosebud softly wakes,
And from its breast shakes out the glittering dew,
As o'er the east the grey dawn slowly breaks,
And rolling clouds disclose the sky's dark blue,
And one by one have faded out the stars,
And o'er the misty hills the bright sun peers;
No noisy turmoil this sweet quiet mars,
But like a holy calm the light appears,
And warbling music wakes within the bowers
As day's bright ensign slowly is unfurled.
How pure and sweet to me those early hours,
Ere tolling bells have waked the slumbering world.
Through life's short day be Thou, O God, my light;
Light, morning-sunshine, holy, calm, and bright.

WHERE FIRST WE MET.

O'er Moredun's thickly wooded slope
The gloaming shadows softly crept,
And evening dews came floating down,
And kissed the the daisies as they slept.
Bright stars o'erhead shone through the trees,
Fair scene—methinks I see it yet—
The spot that mem'ry worships now,
Where first we met, where first we met.

But ah! how swift those happy hours
When young love reigned within my heart,
O can it be that they are gone,
And she and I are far apart?

But in life's cloudy dreary sky
One radiant star still lingers yet,
'Tis "Ever True"—our motto learned
Where first we met, where first we met.

Sweet star, but for thy cheering ray,
My trusting heart would fail me now,
True, "Ever True," Hope's emblem bright—
Our motto and our parting vow.
A tiny lock of silken hair,
A faded violet once so blue,
Whene'er I gaze on these dear gifts
My heart seems whispering "Ever True."

ALAN REID.

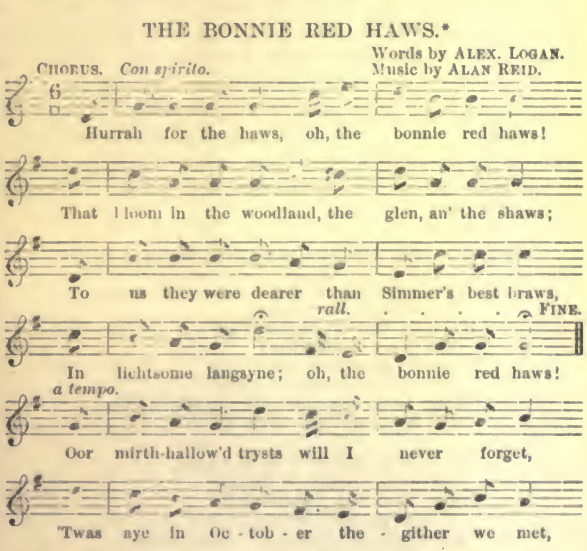
THE talented and genial subject of this sketch was born in 1853 in Arbroath, almost under the shadow of the grand old "Round O" and the massive walls of the venerable Abbey. His parents removed, however, to Forfar soon after the birth of their son. He received a fair education at the Burgh School of the County Town, and on the death of his father, he was, through the influence of a friend, sent to Montrose as messenger and learner in the telegraph office there. But mechanical and artistic leanings drew his attention so much from this occupation that his friends were compelled to give full scope to the bent of his natural inclination, by allowing him to begin, at the age of fourteen, to serve his apprenticeship to the trade of a cabinetmaker in Forfar. He now devoted every spare hour to reading, drawing, and the construction of working models of engines and other machines, singing, music, painting, and occasional "verse-making." His becoming a member of the church choir had a determining influence on the whole of his after career, for a natural gift for music soon developed into a passion.

While a mere lad, he was chosen precentor in the Parish Church of Aberlemno, and subsequently in the Free Church of the same parish, which duties he performed with much acceptance for over two years. This led to his appointment as leader of the psalmody in the Free Church of Carnoustie, and Mr Reid roused an enthusiasm for music that is still a living influence in that locality. His talents were soon recognised, and, after a further experience of more than two years in this charming seaside resort, he was unanimously appointed precentor in one of the largest and most influential churches in Edinburgh.

Soon after removing to the Scottish capital, Mr Reid was engaged as a teacher of singing under the School Board, which position he has filled with much success and acknowledged ability. With ever increasing popularity as a musician his pen has not been idle, and the result is the publishing of a great variety of musical compositions, magazine articles, tales, songs, and hymns. In his special department of school work he has written many bright and popular songs as well as tunes of much merit. Three years ago he published "Ruth," a cantata, the libretto of which was written by Miss A. C. Dey, a talented member of his choir, and which has met with wide and deserved success. During the present year (1886) he has issued a popular reading on "Prince Charlie and the '45," (Paisley: J. & R. Parlane) illustrated with a most judicious selection of Jacobite songs, arranged for choral use, and with a comprehensive and well-written prose "connective reading." This work at once secured wide popularity, and thoroughly merits the praise it has drawn forth from Professor Blackie, Dr Charles Rogers, and other eminent authorities. Mr Reid, we are pleased to learn, is at present engaged on a Scottish cantata, entitled "Freendship's Circle," written by Mr Alex. Logan, one of our sweetest present-day poets, and author of "Poems and Lyrics," "Lays o' Hame an'

Country," &c., which will doubtless do much to extend the reputation both of the poet and the composer. The following is a setting of one of the songs that will have a place in this work :—

THE BONNIE RED HAWS.*

Words by ALEX. LOGAN.
Music by ALAN REID.

Chorus. Con spirito.
Hurrah for the haws, oh, the bonnie red haws!
That bloom in the woodland, the glen, an' the shaws;
To us they were dearer than Simmer's best braws,
rall.
Fine.
In lichtsome langsayne; oh, the bonnie red haws!
a tempo.
Oor mirth-hallow'd trysts will I never forget,
Twas aye in Oc - tob - er the - gither we met,
A band o' blithe hearts, like a flock o' wild craws,
D.C.
The country to scour for the bonnie red haws! Cho.

*From Part II. of "School Music for the Standards." J. AND R. PARLANE, Paisley.

Mr Reid has grasped with a steady and determined hand the ladder of musical fame, and now he stands in a high position. A true Caledonian, he ardently loves "His ain Heather Land," cherishes her

minstrelsy, and reveres her hamely, couthie Doric. From one so full of national enthusiasm, and so deeply imbued with all that is noble and good, we look forward with confidence to much, and, if possible, greater work. Mr Reid is not only an adept at musical composition; but we bring him forward here mainly from the fact that he can also strike the Scottish lyre with much sweetness and pathos. His songs are deeply tender and truly musical. They are both harmonious in feeling and suggestive in idea—smooth and polished, combining ease with elegance, as if the conceptions of the writer had fallen into order without effort.

THE HEATHER DINGS THEM A'!

There's rowth o' praise for gaudy blooms
In gairdens far an' near,
But isna Scotia's heatherbell
The glory o' the year?
In hardy grandeur, see it hap
The mountain an' the shaw,
'Mang gems that deck fair Nature's face
The heather dings them a'!

The burnie bickers doon the glen,
An' saft the sang it sings;
It's a' aboot the heatherbell
Whase partin' kiss it brings;
There's gayer forms, an' brichter hues,
But this chaste floo'erie sma'
Will haud its ain whaur they wad fail,
The heather dings them a'!

Amang its shades the fairies play,
The birdies lo'e its bield;
An' flichtert beasties, sairly prest,
Find in its hap a shield;
It's bonnie aye, but, O, it's grand
When hairst time comes awa,
Its royal tints croon oor auld hills,
The heather dings them a'!

Ring, bonnie bells, sweet heather-bells,
Ring oot yer blithest strain;
An' waft the sang to leal Scotch hearts
In far isles o' the main;

There's mony there that mind ye weel,
Sae bonnie aye, an' braw ;
We'll sing yer praise owre a' the lave,
The heather dings them a' !

"AFF THE FANG."

"We dinna ken the water's worth
Until the well rins dry,"
Sae says the guid auld-farrant crack,
But something mair say I—
For sud the well be droonin' deep,
An' sappy as a sang,
Hoo will ye get the water gin
The pump be aff the fang?
We a' gang wrang at times,
We a' gang wrang ;
An' useless grow as feckless tow
Gin we be aff the fang.

I've seen a body try his best
To coax the driblets sma',
To rise an' droon the gruntin' seon's,
But wi' nae luck ava,
Until a hairie o' the dog
That at the boddam lirked
Was tummilt owre the drouthy craig,
Syne up the rinnie wirked.
We a' gang wrang, &c.

E'en sae I've tried to draw mysel'
Wi' donnert fit an sair,
Alang a road fu' hard an' lang,
But stuck, like mony mair,
Till couthie neebor cam wha kent
The gate's ilk crabbit stane,
An' gied's an oxter up the brae
Till I cud rin my lane.
We a' gang wrang, &c.

I've ta'en a swatch o' meeser loons
Wha'd presses fu' o' gear,
Yet wadna waur a crookit plack,
Nor sinder wi' a hair,
To pleasure man, or bairn, or freend,
Sud profits noo be dour,
They'd toom their gowd at Fortin's fit,
If they but pree'd her sho'er.
We a' gang wrang, &c.

The warld owre its a' the same,
Man canna labour lang,
He canna lauch, nor sing, nor play,
Gin he be aff the fang.
Sae tent yer brithers dool, an' mind
Things at their warst will men',
An' use some cheerie, coaxin' wile
To pit him richt again.
We a' gang wrang, &c.

LASSIE LILTIN' OWRE THE LEA.

Lassie liltin' owre the lea,
Bonnie lassie, a' mine ain,
Sweet's thy sunny sang to me,
Blithe the he'rt it lichts again;
Lang we wandered by the burn,
Late yestreen, we sindered syne,
Waitin' for the nicht's return
Were your 'oors as lang as mine?
Lassie liltin' owre the lea.

O that dad could use my een,
Only for a moment sma',
Could he see what mony's seen
A' his grudge wad wear awa';
He thinks mair o' coos an' lan'
Than o' love that winna droon,
Disna prize an empty han'
Only tochered frae aboon.
Lassie liltin' owre the lea.

Dearer far than gear or gain,
Walth sic treasure canna gie,
Warlds wad be but warlds o' pain
Bonnie lassie wantin' thee.
I'll be true tho' storms sud blaw,
Aye my love shall be thy bield;
An' till death may pairt us twa
There my bonnie flo'er I'll shield.
Lassie liltin' owre the lea.

A WINTER DAY MONODY.

How drear the day, how dismal is its wane,
Sad moans the wind, blight only meets my gaze;
The prospect drear, snow-wreathed every pane,
And ghosts of houses glimmer in the haze.

Now, through a mist of tears, my backward glance
Sees one fair autumn eve, when, mid the charms

Of sunset's radiant glow, our winsome Nance,
Four summers laden, nestled in my arms.

We watched her play with sweet parental joy,
And blessed each turn that brought her to our side,
Her merry laugh rang free from care's alloy,
And each fresh ripple added to our pride.

But tired at length she sought our fond caress,
We stroked her bonnie head and communed low—
"Would that our darling could be ever thus,
Nor wiser be, nor ever older grow."

Ah, little wist we that the wish of love
Should have fulfilment which no love could stay;
The frost which chilled the flowerets of the grove
Cast o'er our blossom sickness and decay.

As fades the vision of the dreamy night,
As dies each hope of perfect earthly bliss,
So passed our darling from our anguished sight,
And memory came with joy for that we miss.

But heaven is richer, now more than a name,
It holds a treasure which we long to see,
An angel form in heaven and here the same,
Which cannot older grow nor wiser be.

THE CHILD AND THE ROSE.

"Have you, my rose, got a story to tell?
Say where you found all your colour and grace;
Tell me, who gave you that rich fragrant smell,
Made you as fair as a wee fairy's face?
Queen of the garden, beautiful rose!
Tell me your story, my own sweet rose.

Is it for me that you're growing down here,
Bathing in perfume the warm summer hours?
Is it to have all the bees humming near,
None of them caring to kiss other flowers—
What is thy story, beautiful rose?
Whisper it softly my own sweet rose."

"Gently I grew; for a kind loving hand
Brought me to life from the winter of death;
Bathed me in dews of the far angel land,
Breathed through my petals a heavenly breath."
"More of thy story, beautiful rose!
Tell it me freely, my own sweet rose."

"Sunshine and shower have nourished me long
Soft breezes fanned me as they have passed by,
Birdies and bees have oft cheered me with song,
But summer is dying, and I, too, must die."
"Sad is thy story, beautiful rose—
Why must you leave us, my own sweet rose?"

"Nay, darling child, there is nothing of pain,
Nothing of sadness my life has been pure;
When the spring comes I'll be blooming again,
Sweetness and beauty for ever endure."
"Kiss me, good-bye, then, beautiful rose!
Haste thy returning, my own sweet rose.

Come with the balm-laden odours of spring—
Spring of the flowers and butterflies gay;
Bring all the birdies that merrily sing,
Bring all the bees with the blossoms to play,
Queen of the garden, beautiful rose!
Gaily I'll welcome my own sweet rose."

CATHERINE MACLEOD,

THE authoress of "Occasional Thoughts in Verse," a memorial volume printed privately for her friends, was the youngest child of Donald Macleod of Geanies and his first wife, who was a daughter of Mr Crawford, a wealthy Rotterdam merchant, originally from Ayrshire. She was born at Geanies, which was sold at her father's death, and died at a very advanced age at Crawford Bank, Lasswade. She kept up a very extensive correspondence with her numerous literary relatives and friends, including such well-known Scottish families as the Gregorys, the Alisons, the Chalmerss, and the Mackenzies. The late Dr James Gregory, Professor of the Theory of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, was married to a sister of Miss Macleod in 1796. Her letters were always elegant examples of epistolary composition—an accomplish-

ment which was as much studied in her day as it is neglected now. Mr Crawford, her grandfather, is mentioned in Mrs Delany's "Letters," and in Miss Berry's "Journal." The initials "J.M.," attached to the prefatory note in the volume we have referred to, are those of the Rev. John Mackenzie, her nephew, who married Eliza, second daughter of Dr Chalmers. There is therefore an interesting literary association of memories in the fact of the cousinship of the Macleods and Mackenzies with the "Man of Feeling." From Mr Mackenzie's preface to the memorial volume we learn that most of the poems printed therein were written after Miss Macleod had reached the advanced age of eighty-six, and was unable, through failure of sight, to read what she had written. "These circumstances," says Mr Mackenzie, "but need to be mentioned in order to enhance whatever intrinsic merit they possess, and account for any defects of rhyme or measure that may strike the critical eye. Nor can it fail to invest them with an additional interest and charm to know that their composition afforded a sweet solace of her lonely hours to the venerable writer under that privation which, to her active mind and keen sense of the beautiful, must have been so peculiarly trying, and which to the last she bore with such Christian resignation and such uniform cheerfulness." Her thoughts seemed habitually to revolve in an atmosphere of piety, and appear to have been dipt in a fount of heavenly radiance. Her ideas possess both thought and poetical expression, and evince a tender, gentle spirit. The poem we quote, entitled "The Olden Time," was suggested by these words of fond regret, which many a time closed domestic recitals of the past, by one long known in the author's family by the name of "Nurse"—"The days that are gone, where are they?"

MEMORIES OF MUSIC.

The airy sound still lingers on mine ear,
Seems o'er my soul to breathe its mournful tone,
And tenderness has dropped the swelling tear,
That sprang as mem'ry woke o'er bliss now flown—
O'er bliss unspeakable, for ever gone!
These notes but raise a visionary glow,
Yet let the soft delusive strain wind on,
In cadence meet retracing weal or woe,
Tho' still my thoughts entranced, down sorrow's channel flow!

Soft is the sadness of the mountain lay
When plaintive it would soothe the soul to rest;
But blithe its trilling on the joyous day
When mirth and glee its merrier note express'd;
Sweet cheerfulness! the heart's most welcome guest,
Why do thy sprightly chords now wake but sighs?
Their touch once bade glee quiver at my breast—
But now, all quivering glee my bosom flies,
And sorrow seems most sad, when joys discordant rise

Hark! up yon glade where sunny morn has smiled,
And little warblers sing till eve's sweet close,
If nature's voice can rouse thee, sorrowing child,
Or nature's music charm thee to repose,
List the glad rapture in each note that glows!
Could gayer song in greener bower be sung?
Can notes like these not win thee from thy woes?
Ah! sweetest melody, tho' wildly rung,
To all it sings of joy,—to me, of joy undone!

For still these notes recall young life to sight;
Blithe were the sportive toils such songs have cheer'd;
We wove the bower, together cull'd delight,
And all that bright young happiness endear'd;
How endless to my sight such joys appear'd!
Yet soon they trembled, soon their brightness fled,
For shadows hover'd which we had not fear'd;
Then rapt enthusiasm droop'd her head,
Her warmest, sweetest light, quench'd in the tears now shed.

Yet heard I not afar, what might impart
To grief a truer, holier sympathy?
A strain that heav'nward heaves the aching heart,
Though sung by choir of rudest minstrelsy,
Where the wild breeze makes soft the melody
Of thousands gather'd in the mountain glen
To worship God. Rise, heav'nly ecstasy!
Wing my soul's flight on high, nor cease the strain
Until it waft me to celestial joy!
But silence reigns! closed with the close of even,
And now I wake to earth, when I had dreamed in heaven!

COME WEARY PILGRIM.

Come, weary Pilgrim, tread with me
The path to rest above,
And, weary Pilgrim, chant with me
The songs of light and love.
What tho' distress'd, by care oppress'd,
Until we reach the shore,
Then, weary Pilgrim, we may rest
Where we shall weep no more.

On, weary Pilgrim, onward move,
Nor linger on thy way;
Gird up thy loins, and faithful prove,
Thy God will be thy stay.
Oh, dry thine eye, and hush that sigh,
Our cares will soon be o'er;
Yes! weeping mourner, dry thine eye,
For sin shall reign no more.

Haste, Pilgrim, haste! I see the stream
Bright glancing in yon ray.
See, Brother, see! that glorious beam,
It lights eternal day!
O haste to lave mid Jordan's wave,
And thence to reach the shore!
Then, Brother, then we'll enter in,
And we'll go out no more.

Mount, spirits, mount! the stream is pass'd,
Your pilgrim weeds are gone!
White-robed, the saints to hail you haste,
Your robes and crowns are won!
The heavens around with shouts resound,
And angels, as they soar,
Swell the glad song, the notes prolong
Of joy for evermore.

THE OLDEN TIME.

Yes! they are gone—thou knew'st not where,
For who that airy flight may trace?
But thou hadst caught their image fair
To picture, tho' with fleeting grace,
And bid them find, ere passed for aye,
Sweet rest in thy fond memory.

And resting there, thou'dst oft impart,
In varying tones of grave or gay,
The glowing treasures of thine heart,
The living dreams of brighter day,

As if thou'dst have them surely be
Transferr'd to my poor memory.

Mine aged friend, lowly yet dear,
Long since departed to thy rest,
Removed, I ween, to holier sphere,
To me thy name seems ever bless'd;
Fain would I trace with pencil true,
That presence which so well I knew,
Ev'n as at latest interview.

Thy faded bloom, thy silver'd hair,
Soft sorrow trembling in thy voice,
With quiv'ring lip, and starting tear,
As if thou'dst never more rejoice!
How present still—and still shall be
Ev'n unto fading memory.

"BE HAPPY WHILE YOU MAY."

Bright young joy, spread your store,
Count each treasure o'er and o'er;
Hover light on downy wing,
Chant the music of the spring;
Fill my bosom with delight,
Snatch each sorrow from my sight;
O'er the future drear expanse
Draw the veil of ignorance;
Teach my heart that coming woe,
God, all wise, forbids to know;
Check the erring hand that dares
Raise the veil that hides our cares,
Lest the chilling view dispel
Charms that in my bosom dwell;
Lest it bid each rosy dream
Vanish as the setting beam;
Rather seize each happy hour
In the season of its power;—
When the jocund reign is fled,
Enough the tears that we must shed!

On meeting with the foregoing twenty years later.

And tears enough have now been shed,
For joy! thy jocund reign was o'er
Ere half thy little store was spread,
Ere high thy downy wing could soar!

Thy sparkling smile when bathed in grief,
Soon perish'd in the streaming tide,
Tho' now witholding fond relief,
The fountain of my tears is dried.

Thy sportive wing that loved the light,
Could not abide the lowering storm ;
And airy dreams, now closed in night,
Shall never gild a waking morn !

Sweet light of youth ! thy day is o'er,
Yet never may thy smile offend ;
For he who amply filled thy store,
Youth's sunny smile has ne'er condemn'd.

And tho' it perish'd in the stream
Of grief amid the chastening storm,
Celestial radiance yet shall beam,
And raise it in a fairer form.

Tho' the young flame be quench'd on earth,
A light for age beams bright from heaven ;
And better far than joyous mirth
May gently smiling Peace be given !

JOHN HOGG

WAS born at Kirkfieldbank, a village in the Parish of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, in 1839. In his ninth year he began to work with his father, who was a handloom weaver, and without having been at school. For several years afterwards, however, he attended evening classes, and was a diligent scholar. When about twenty years of age he began to read the *Hamilton Advertiser*, and soon not only became a lover of "The Poet's Corner," but also occasionally composed short poems and songs. After a number of pieces that he had sent to the editor had been rejected, he was at last successful, and a neat little poem, entitled "My Father's Cot," secured a place, "during the same year in which he was married." Since then he has been a frequent and much appreciated contributor to various newspapers and periodicals. In 1872,

with a family to provide for, and finding the wages of a weaver rather small to enable him to make "ends meet," he got work from the Caledonian Railway Company at Carstairs, where he continued for several years. At present he is employed by the Nitshill & Leshmahagow Coal Company at Auchinheath as a pit head labourer, being exposed to all kinds of weather, and travelling five miles morning and night to and from the colliery. Although he has litt.e time to cultivate the Muse, yet, while trudging along the road he frequently composes neat and thoughtful little poems and songs—the verse being smooth and pleasing, and his ideas expressed with considerable grace and spirit.

AULD WATTY BROWNLEE.

Whaur's noo the auld birkie ance leev'd in oor toon,
Weel kent 'mang the rustics for miles roun' an' roun',
Oor piper an' fiddler at ony bit spree,
Oor sexton an' bellman, auld Watty Brownlee?

For mony a year Watty leev'd at Howdell,
In a wee divit hoose he biggit himsel',
The Duke in his palace nae blyther could be,
Sae gay an' licht-hearted was Watty Brownlee.

In winter, when nichts were baith dreary an' lang,
My cronies an' me doon to Watty's wad gang,
An' hear him tell hoo he ance served in the Line,
An whaur he had been wi' the sodgers langsyne.

Ilk nicht his queer stories were maistly a' new,
'Bout Wellington, Blucher, an' grim Waterloo;
Field-marshals an' gen'rals he spak o' wi' glee,
An' men wha for harshness wad match'd wi' Dundee.

We miss oor auld worthy—he's deid an' awa',
Whaur stood his wee cot we've a Teetotal Ha',
My youthfu' companions, whaurever they be,
Will min' the turf biggin' an' Watty Brownlee.

A REVERIE.

They're truly bless'd, some folk will say, wha've purse an' pantry fu',
And wha can dress fu' braw ilk day wi' robes o' richest hue,

An' jaunt aboot in big machines wi' servants at their ca',
An' join in revelry ilk nicht in their grand muckle ha'.

But folk can think whate'er they like, I carena what they say,
They're no the happiest on earth, I doubt, wha aye look gay;
My humble lot I wadna change wi' ony duke I ken;
Tho' 'mang the puirest in the lan' there's joy at oor fire-en'.

Oor Nell's a sonsie thrifty quean, keeps a' thing trig an' braw,
The very curry stules an' chairs a' maistly white as snaw,
The bairnies duds, tho' worn threadbare, are weel men't, an' they're clean;
A clever, active, frugal wife aye mak's a house look bien.

We ne'er had unco muckle gear, tho' wonderfu' content,
Wi' what, as grannie used to say, kind Providence has sent;
We've mony a slip on life's steep brae like ither folk we ken,
While's canna get a' en's to meet, but manage aye to fen.

THE LITTLE WANDERIN' JEW.

Oor Davie's noo a brisk wee lad, a reckless steerin' loon,
Frae morn till e'en, wi' ither bairns, he scours the country roon;
Whiles doon aboot the riverside, whiles skelpin' through the shaw,
An' never thinks o' comin' hame till twilight shadows fa'.

There's no a place a' roon aboot whaur Davie hasna been,
He's whiles as far as Hazelbank, whaur leeves his auntie Jean,
The falls o' Clyde, famed Cartland Crags, to Davie's naethin' new,
He speels their rocky shaggy steeps, the little wanderin' Jew.

He's while's awa we kenna whaur, wi' little in his wame,
Sax langsome hours, an' sometimes mair, he'll bide awa' frae hame;
His mither wonderin' whaur he'll be, she seeks him up an' doun,
And canna hear a word o' him frae ane in a' the toon.

We've urged an' coax'd him a' we can to play aboot the lane,
Yet every chance the birkie gets he's oot o' sicht again;
Romantic glens an' woodlands wild he rambles through and through,
But aye comes hame at gloamin' mirk, the little wanderin' Jew.

TO THE RIVER CLYDE.

Sweet Clyde, my rustic harp I'll tune
An' sing thy praise ance mair,
Hoo aft methinks in rosy June,
Nae spot on earth sae fair

As whaur the wee turf biggin' stood,
Owergrown wi' evergreen,
'Twas grannie's hoose, auld-fashioned, rude,
But cosy, douce, an' bien.

Sweet river, hoo I lo'e thy name,
Sae sweet it sounds—the Clyde,
It minds me o' a happy hame,
Langsyne, at Gowanside.
It minds me aye o' Clydesholm green,
Whaur neath a muckle tree,
Tradition says a fairy queen
Whiles held a jubilee.

An' yet, fair stream, I love to stray
Thy leafy bowers amang,
An' listen to the lark's sweet lay,
An' blackbird's mellow sang,
Or muse on youthful happy days
Spent 'mang thy woods wi' pride,
Thy rocky glens an' flowery braes,
Hoo dear to me sweet Clyde.

THOS. LIVINGSTONE FENTON LIVINGSTONE

OF West Quarter, Stirlingshire, was born at Shrewsbury in 1829, but he has spent the greater portion of his life in Scotland. He received in his native town that rudimentary education which its scholastic institutions are so well qualified to impart, and which no doubt formed a good foundation for the prelections and dessertations appertaining to higher studies and advancing years. Early in life he succeeded to the estate of West Quarter on the death of his relative, Sir Thomas Livingstone, Bart., of that ilk. But the baronetcy, being devised under a different and peculiar destination, has presented legal and technical difficulties for which no one has yet found a satisfactory solution, and it remains still in

abeyance. Mr Fenton Livingstone, soon after his succession to this property, married the only child of the late William Waddell, W.S., of Easter Moffat, Lanarkshire, where he and his lady now reside. Never having adopted any profession, he has occupied himself mainly in the discharge of the duties of citizenship and the courtesies of Society. But possessing much of the poetical temperament, he makes an occasional excursion into the flowery land of fancy, and the result of one or two of these we have considered not unworthy to be laid before our readers, exhibiting, as they do, no inconsiderable amount of poetic talent, much tenderness of sentiment, a just estimate of human life and feeling, and a fluency of expression that renders even ordinary subjects interesting and attractive.

THE EYE.

In childhood a trifle capsizes our feelings,
And wayward and wild are our plaints and our cries,
Then where do we carry our woeful appealings,
But to her who receives us with pitying Eyes?

In boyhood, when slow, and reluctantly too,
We pore o'er our lessons with scarce stifled sighs,
How anxious we feel as we stealthily view
The master, and sound him by watching his Eyes.

In youth, when Love's Fancy has mastered our mind,
And we deem we've discovered an exquisite prize,
How we rave and complain that stern fate is unkind
If we can't catch a glimpse of those black or blue Eyes.

In mid age it still holds the same to a hair,
Be it business or love that our time occupies,
The motive of action I'm free to declare
Is mainly to stand well in somebody's Eyes.

When age overtakes us, and powers decay,
And our temper and frame imbecility tries,
The keenest regret that we feel is dismay
At the prospect of losing the use of our Eyes.

Oh, give me the Eyes that beam brightly and soft,
In whose scintillations unhappiness dies,
The stars may seem bright that are shining aloft,
But they've nought of the love that illumines the Eyes.

ONE TRUE FRIEND.

Oh ! sweet to the ear of a dying child is the soothing voice of love,
As in faltering tones of tenderness it whispers of One above ;
And sweet to the mind of that parent dear, as she views the verdant sod,
Is the thought that the babe who resteth there is communing with God.

But sweeter far to the weary heart is the voice of one true friend,
Whose words of soothing sympathy with all our feelings blend,
Who ever 'mid the storms of life, and the shock of earthly grief,
Stands firm and stedfast ever near to cheer and give relief.

Who when old Time's remorseless hand has laid us 'mid the dead,
And all our powers for good or ill have with our being fled,
Still true to that harmonic chord that vibrates in his breast
Swells the fond symphony of praise, and checks the careless jest.

A CONTRAST.

What a beautiful sight
Is a calm summer night,
When the wind o'er the flowers is creeping,
When the star's bright ray,
And the moonbeams play,
And Nature in peace seems sleeping.
While each fair flower
In Flora's bower,
Its tender head is bending,
Like a darling child
To sleep beguiled,
By its mother's gentle tending.

But a gloomy sight
Is a winter's night,
With its chill and pinching gale,
That sighs and moans
In dreary tones,
Like some lost spirit's wail,
While over all,
Like a solemn pall,
Hang skies of sable hue ;
And a lurid gleam
Is all we seem
Of night's fair orb to view,
And the bare old trees
Sway in the breeze,
And fling their arms on high,
Like the hand of age
That turns the page
Of life, and waits to die.

DAVID GRANT,

A MAN of cultured mind as well as true poetic feeling and fancy, and one of the most fascinating of our present-day poets, was born in 1823 at Affrusk, a farm in the parish of Upper Banchory, Kincardineshire. He is a cousin of the late Joseph Grant, a youth of much literary promise, who wrote the "Tales of the Glens," and other pieces of great merit, but who died ere he reached his prime. From an appreciative sketch in "The Poet's Album," we learn that his paternal forefathers belonged to Morayshire, whence they removed to Kincardineshire about the middle of last century. They were a race of farmers, and within the recollection of our poet they occupied a number of the best farms on the banks of the Feugh. His mother's family came from Forfarshire, and more remotely from Germany. To obtain a classical education was his early and most ardent ambition. It was not, however, before 1849 that he was enabled to enter Marischal College, Aberdeen, and it was even then under circumstances so little favourable to study that his health, always delicate, broke down, and necessitated his leaving College before completing his arts course.

Mr Grant began the teaching profession in 1852, but the continued precarious state of his health greatly retarded his advancement. For a number of years he taught in several parish schools in Scotland, after which, in 1861, he was appointed French master in Oundle Grammar School, Northamptonshire. About four years later he became vice-principal and chief classical master of Ecclesall College, a private middle-class educational institution near Sheffield. Subsequently he was induced to purchase the goodwill of a day school in Sheffield, and this latter proved the first step

in a series of misfortunes. The Elementary Educational Act of 1870 speedily took hold of secondary and middle-class education in England, and closed nearly every venture boy's school in Sheffield without giving any compensation whatever to the proprietor. Mr Grant struggled on with his charge till 1880, when he succumbed after having lost his little all. "Since then I have," he says, in a letter to the editor of the "Poet's Album," "procured for my family and myself a hand-to-mouth subsistence by acting as a private tutor. During the last few years I have had to zig-zag Edinburgh, town and country, from Dalkeith to Dean Bridge, for an average weekly income at which many a hand worker would turn up his nose. Literature, properly so called, has not been the business but the by-play of my life, but I have always been a ready writer of verse." We regret to learn by a letter from Mr Grant that he has been for nearly a year in a very weak state of health. In February (1886) he writes—"The doctor says I am far gone in consumption, and all he can do for me is to endeavour to keep me alive till the good weather comes, when something may be done for me by change of climate." His friends are anxious to secure for him a Civil List Pension. At the University he gained Professor Blackie's prize for poetry. Many of his songs have been set to music by talented composers, and he has contributed to newspapers and magazines numerous prose articles, tales, and sketches. His delightful tales of Scottish life and character are full of fine descriptive writing, and as a proof of their graphic power and pawkie humour, the *Christian Leader* lately attributed several of his sketches, that appeared in the *Aberdeen Free Press* under a *nome-de-plume*, to the author of "Johnnie Gibb," adding that "nothing better than these have appeared since 'Mansie Wauch.'"

Mr Grant is author of two large volumes of poetry, besides several smaller works. His first selec-

tion of poems, &c., entitled "Metrical Tales," was published in Sheffield in 1880, while a handsome work was published by Messrs Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier, Edinburgh, in 1884, entitled "Lays and Legends of the North." Alike in bulk, literary worth, and "get-up," this volume is superior to most of the poetical publications now in fashion. One of his critics says:—"The author has the audacity to write as he is moved by the spirit of song, regardless of new-fangled metres. He is a poet in the old-fashioned sense in which Burns and Crabbe were poets. He gets his inspiration from every-day life. The things most familiar to him are also the most ideal things. He knows Greek, but he prefers 'Tammie Tod' as a subject for his Muse to the wanderings of Ulysses." Although this is the case, nearly one hundred pages of the volume consists of translations and paraphrases from some of the best German, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek writers. These prove our author to be not only an excellent poet, but also a classical scholar, and it will thus be observed that, although our poet is no stranger to other languages and other literatures, these have failed to rob him of that intense love for his native land which is born with every true Scotchman. The *Scotsman* says of his "Lays"—"They are the genuine product of a nature profoundly in sympathy with the whole life of the population with whose joys and sorrows they are concerned." Many of his songs contain a delicate vein of fancy, and they are evidently entirely free of simulated emotion. He ever manifests a quick eye, and the faculty that enables him to fling a warm light upon the grouping of his pictures of old times, now rapidly becoming a memory. Mr Grant's supreme merit in the great company of living minor poets lies in the soundness of his subject-matter and in the naturalness of his style. He has something of the peculiar genius that produced "Tam o' Shanter," for in his "Metrical Tales"—we regret

their length precludes our giving any of them entire—there are passages and touches here and there that might have come from the hands of Burns. "The Muckle Spate" is the longest of these tales. It consists of "memorials of the spate in auchteen twenty-nine, as the same exhibited itsel' in the Howe o' Feugh to the een an' imagination o' an indwaller i' the parish o' Stra'an." From first to last his plan of presenting a humorous panorama of the flood is carried out with vigour and glee. There is no break, no hesitation, no sign of labour or of difficulty in the easy and triumphant sweep of the measure. The graphic medley of what "came down with the flood" includes—

Horse, pigs, an' kye were droont i' Dye,
An' sheep by scores in A'un,
An' yarn reels, an' spinnin' wheels,
An' bowies, cogs, an' caups,
An' tables, chairs, an' cutty steels,
On ane anither's taps;
An' girnels, amuries, washin' tubs,
An' smuggled whisky kegs;
Cheese chessils, butter kits, and kirns,
An' couple backs and legs;
An' divots, thack, an' timmer tums,
An' rantle trees wi' cruiks,
An' backets, baith for aise and saut,
An' racks for plates an' buiks.

. . . . .

At Connochie a cluckin' hen
Wis sittin' in a kist,
Baith it an' her were sweelt awa'
Afore the creature wist.
We saw her passin' near Heugh-Head,
As canty as ye like,
Afore her ark a droonit stirk,
Ahint a droonit tike.

Among the various "mischanters" that befel the residenters in the Vale of Feugh, we may quote that which happened to "Johnny Joss, the cadger"—

A cadger body, Johnny Joss,
  Nae far frae Bogendreep,
Lost shawltie, cairtie, creels an' a',
  At ae unlucky sweep.
The shawlt was droonit at the sta',
  The cairt washed fae the shed,
An' Johnny made a nar' escape
  Fae droonin' in his bed;
But aifter a' the splore was owre,
  The body, far fae blate,
Contrived to turn to gweed account
  The losses by the spate.
He got a beggin' paper drawn
  By some beuk-learnt chiel',
An' beggit Banchory, Birse, an' Stra'an,
  An' bits o' Dores as weel;
An' took a soud o' siller up,
  An' when his pouch wis foo,
Crap slyly o'er the Cairn o' Mont
  Wi' very sma' ado;
An' took a tackie i' the Mearns,
  An' got a braw gudewife,
An' lived a much respectit man
  The remnant o' his life.
He widna win in twenty years
  By sellin' stinkin' skate
The half o' what he got in lieu
  O' losses by the spate.

The tollman has been drinking with a few cronies, and, when they take their leave, he sinks under the table—

An' aye the Feugh gaed rairin' past
  Wi' lood an' looder soun',
Abeen the brig, abeen the brae,
  Up to the window sole
The water raise, an' filter't in
  At ilka cranny hole.

At last the tollman, half-drowned, talks in his drunken sleep. He imagines that his cronies are pouring liquor down his throat—

"An' mair nor that, ye've droon't the drink;
  The fushion o't is oot.
It's caul', it's weak, it's waur, I say,
  Nor water fae the spoot."

Aul' Eppie here cam' doon the stair
Else Davit had been droon't,
An' when she saw the state o' things,
In fac' she nearly swoon't.
"O Davit, we're in sic a spate
As never yet cam' doon!
Come up the stair, ye senseless gowk,
Unless ye want to droon.
Ye drunken, doitet ne'er-do-weel,
Come up the stair at ance!
Ere I come at ye wi' a rung
An brak yer lazy banes!
Fat ever keeps ye ficherin' there?
Ye're either fey or daft;
Gin there be safety i' the hoose
It's i' the eemest laft.
That I wis left to mairry you—
O weary fa' the day!
But yet I dinna want ye droon't—
Ye're a' the man I hae!"
An' there, owermaister't by her grief,
A tear ran doon her nose;
She micht 'a' ventur't to the deece,
But Davit, pechin', rose,
An' stoitet forret, sair perplex't,
Through water three feet deep,
Scarce kennin' gin he wis awauk
Or dreamin' fast asleep,
Till Eppie got him by the tap
An' pu't him up the stair,
Quo' Davit then, "I'm wauken't, wife,
Lat go my puckle hair!
I'm wauken't, wife! lat go my hair,
Ye're lowsin't at the reet!"
Quo' Eppie than, "Come up the stair,
Ye gweed-for-naething breet!"
Nor farther sall the Muse relate
Fat passed atween the pair,
But neepers always blamed the spate
For thinnin' Davit's hair.

MY MITHER TONGUE.

My mither tongue! owre seldom heard,
Your accents thrill me through;
Ye gar my heart loup to my lips,
My very een rin fu';
Ye waft me back to blither times,
To days when I was young,
When love an' hope baith spak' in thee,
My couthie mither tongue.

My mither tongue! my infant cares
Were soothed to rest in thee;
"John Anderson" an' "Duncan Gray"
Hae aften closed my e'e;
An' "Bonnie Doon," or "Auld Lang Syne,"
Aboon my cradle sung,
Hae made me dream that angel choirs
Used aye my mither tongue.

My mither tongue! a bairn at schule
In English buiks I read;
An' warsled sair wi' English facts
To pang my laddie head.
But when my heart was big wi' wae,
Or lowin' love upsprung;
My feelin's aye gushed out in thee,
My couthie mither tongue.

My mither tongue! how aft hae I
My very meals forgot,
While porin' o'er the wizard page
O' Ramsay, Burns, or Scott.
On "Tam o' Shanter's" midnicht ride,
Or Hornbook's pranks I've hung;
Rehearsed wi' matchless power in thee,
My couthie mither tongue.

My mither tongue! I daurna name
The loves o' bygane years;
It ill becomes a bearded man
To blin' his een wi' tears.
I daurna name the welcomes warm
That roun' my heart hae clung,
The sad fareweels expressed in thee,
My couthie mither tongue.

I daurna conjure up the spots
Where cheerfu' childhood played,
The broomy knowes, the fairy howes
Where hopefu' manhood strayed.
I daurna name departed frien's,
Whase hands my hands hae wrung,
An' poured their latest blessin's out
In thee, my mither tongue.

My mither tongue, some ca' ye rude,
An' some hae wished ye dead;
Ye winna dee, ye canna dee,
Sae lang as Burns is read;
An' that will be while warl's rin roun'
An' suns in space are hung;

While wisdom, wit, an' music live,
Ye'll live, my mither tongue.

My mither tongue, ye'll haud the grip
While words hae power to teach,
While human feelin's link themsel's
To blithe or dowie speech ;—
While hopes an' fears, an' joys an' griefs,
While loves are said or sung,
Ye'll haud the grip in spite o' a',
My couthie mither tongue ;—
Till suns grow cauld, an' Natur's sel'
Creeps feckless o'er a rung,
Ye winna dee, ye canna dee,
Dear Scotia's magic tongue.

THE CHILD AND THE BIRD.

CHILD.

Little bird, little bird, up on the spray,
Joining thy voice to the voices of May,
Art thou not a-weary all the day long
Straining thy wee throat and pouring thy song?
Little bird, little bird, evening is near,
Come into my chamber and rest without fear.

BIRD.

Little child, little child, all the long day
Do not thy tiny feet patter and play,
Up and down, out and in, never at rest,
Till sleep folds thy fingers upon thy wee breast?
Little child, little child, song is to me
As needful, as joyful, as play is to thee.

DUET.

Child and bird, child and bird, over us fleet
Sunny hours, golden hours, hours ever sweet,
While earth is in blossom, and life is in spring,
And light-hearted laughter and merry songs ring.

CHILD.

Little bird, little bird, were it not well
Thou shouldst consent in my chamber to dwell?
Storm could not frighten here, hawk could not take,
And well would I feed thee with sugar and cake;
Little bird, little bird, shelter thee here
And never know hunger, danger, nor fear.

BIRD.

Little child, little child, dost thou not know
How the years come, and the glad spirits go,
Soon may the joyance thou woo'st me to share
Change for thyself into sorrow and care.
Sport in thy chamber, sweet child, whilst thou may,
I'll warble my ditties up here on the spray.

DUET.

Child in the chamber, and bird in the tree,
Each will have cares, will have sorrows to dree,
Droop the wing, cease to sing, never more play,
Ah ! these are gloomy thoughts, chase them away—
Gloomy thoughts, gloomy thoughts, chase them away.

SISTER HELEN.

It was in the month of August—
  How the seasons wing their flight ;
I am fifty summers older
  Since that fateful August night.
'Twas in August, I remember,
  When beneath our birchen tree
Played my little sister Helen
  With myself, a child as she,
Played, the while our busy mother
  Plied her ceaseless toils within,
Glad, so we remained contented,
  To escape our childish din;
But as day advanced the mountains
  Crowned their crests with fleecy mist,
And the murky clouds descended
  Till their rims the forests kissed.
Then my little sister Helen
  Laid her hand upon her brow,
"Take me in, I pray thee, brother,
  I am tired of playing now.
Take me in and bid my mother
  Lay me down upon my bed :
There is something, oh, so painful,
  Shooting through and through my head !"

I remember how we laid her
  On her bed as she desired,
Thinking she was only sleepy,
  Slightly chilled, or extra tired.
But she tossed, and moaned, and shivered,
  Seized as by a sudden blight ;
Paled and flushed, grew sick and sicker,

Till we listened with affright
To her heavy laboured breathings,
Saw her lips with fever baked,
Saw the last spasmodic struggle
When she slept and never waked.

I remember weeping sorely
When her infant spirit fled,
Though I comprehended little
What was meant by "She is dead!"
I remember how my mother
Sobbed as if her heart would break,
And my father tried to cheer her,
Looking cheerful for her sake.
I remember how the joiner
Brought a strangely-fashioned chest,
And they laid my sister in it,
All in snowy garments drest:
How the neighbours round assembled,
Stood with sombre clothes and looks,
Listening to the solemn parson,
With their faces on their books;
How they bore away my sister,
And her mortal parts, they said,
By our buried brother Thomas,
Near the Parish Church were laid;
But they said her soul had risen
To a beautiful abode,
Whither I, if I were worthy,
Should ascend to her and God.

JOHNNY, MAN, I'M WANTIN' SILLER.

I'm nae a man to mak' complaint
At ilka turn o' wind an' weather,
Wi' warldly life I'm weel content
Though it's nae faultless a'thegither;
My very wife—an' mair's the shame
There are sae mony marrows till her—
Has ae bit faut I'm wae to name—
Her cry is aye, "I'm wantin' siller."
The constant sang where'er I gang
Is, "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller;"
The constant sang where'er I gang
Is, "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller."

I hinna prospered weel in trade,
An' aye the times are gettin' harder,
Wi' profits sma' an' sma'er made
While mou's grow mair to toom the larder;
But still my Katie's cry's the same,

Or maybe sharper whiles an' shriller,
Her constant cry when I come hame
Is, "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller."
The constant sang where'er I gang, &c.

I hae a thrivin' brither Tam,
At fifty years an' three he's single;
But yet for his, though poor I am
I wadna change my canty ingle:
For Katie has a couthie way
That won my heart an' knits it till her
In spite o' that dementin' cry
O' "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller."
The constant sang where'er I gang, &c.

I lo'e my wife, I lo'e my bairns;
Gin Fortune wid but use me better
I'd buy them bonnie things in cairns
An' nane hae power to ca' me debtor;
But plague on Fortune, a' my life
I've fouud in her a sair ill-willer,
An' ither's noo as weel's my wife
Cry, "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller."
The constant sang where'er I gang, &c.

But I've a frien' o' genius rare
Wha has a clever scheme to patent
For keepin' wives an' bairns on air
Or something in the air that's latent;
Gin it succeed, nae mair I'll dread
To meet the soutar or the miller,
Nor yet will Katie craze my head
Wi' "Johnny, man, I'm wantin' siller."
The constant sang where'er I gang, &c.

AULD DUNCAN.

Auld Duncan was stiff an' rheumatic,
A martyr to spasms and pains;
His bluid was sae chill an' phlegmatic,
It scarcely wad crawl through his veins.

In winter he shivered, an' toastit
His shins by the side o' the fire;
In summer he hirpled an' hostit,
An' death was his only desire.

His wife, wi' his grainin' sae weary,
Was fain to have seen him awa';
But wisna it dowie an' eerie?—
Hersel' was the first gat the ca'.

Then Duncan's rheumatics forsook him,
His pains an' his aches took their flicht;
To market an' kirk he betook him,
Fu' gleg o' baith hearin' an' sicht.

He jokit, he leer'd, an' he smirkit,
The hearts o' the fair to engage;
Ere sax months he'd marrit an' kirkit
A hizzy o' half his ain age.

The limmer! ah, sair she tormentit
An' worrit the auld body's life,
Till hourly he grat an' lamentit
The loss o' his ancient guidwife.

THE ANGEL BIRD.

O bonnie bird! O bonnie bird!
I wis' I kent yer sang,
Methinks it tells whaur Jamie is,
An' hoo he bides sae lang.

'Tis weary months an' weary years
Sin' Jamie gae'd to sea—
O bonnie bird! O bonnie bird!
What keeps my love frae me?

Methinks ye are an angel sent
Frae some far distant pairt
To ease me o' the dowie grief
That wears awa' my hairt.

Ye're nae a bird o' Scotia's breed
Yer like I never saw,
I never heard sae sweet a voice
Sin' Jamie gaed awa'.

Ye're nae a bird o' earthly race,
Yer feathers are sae fair,
Ye maun hae come frae Paradise,
Sent down by Jamie there.

I ken my Jamie maun be drowned,
For it cud never be
That ony ither han' than death's
Cud haud him back frae me.

O bonnie bird! O angel bird!
When ye return aboon,
To Jamie there the message bear,
That I shall join him soon.

O bonnie bird ! O angel bird !
Yer sang, sae heavenly sweet,
Wad ance hae filled my een wi' tears,
But noo I canna greet.

JANET WYLD PITCAIRN.

THE youthful writer of the following graceful poems, is the daughter of A. Y. Pitcairn, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, and grand-daughter of the late well-known and highly-esteemed Rev. Thomas Pitcairn of Cockpen, who held for many years the position of Clerk of the General Assembly—first in the Church of Scotland, and, subsequent to the Disruption, in the Free Church. She was born and educated in Edinburgh, and that city has always continued to be her home. At a very early age—indeed as soon as she had learned to write—she tried composing in prose and in verse. Little stories and rhymed pieces were now and then discovered amongst her papers, scribbled on any stray scraps that had come to hand. Very early, too, Miss Pitcairn developed a taste for the best literature—especially poetry, that of Tennyson being her greatest delight. She has continued as she grew up to give expression to her deeper feelings from time to time in verse, not by regular effort, or in compliance with suggestions of particular themes, but in an entirely spontaneous way, as she was moved by the sweet influence of Nature, in a golden sunset, or in the first piping of the blackbird on a spring day. Several of her productions have appeared in the *Christian Week*, the *Home Friend*, and elsewhere. Most of her manuscript poems bear the dates of summertime, composed in some beautiful locality, and eloquently tell their

own tale of how they were inspired. Her life for some years has been the busy but unobtrusive one of a loving "daughter at home," but such a life, judging from the poems before us, has been anything but unfavourable to the cultivation of the Muse. Her style is delicate and natural, and she knows how to transfer to her page truthful and appreciative touches direct from the face of Nature.

A PILGRIM PSALM.

"Say it after me, little child,
'The Lord is my shepherd;'"
And straightway the little child replies,
With face upturned to the holy eyes,
"The Lord is my Shepherd."

No fear for the future lieth hid
In the Lamb's confiding;
"I shall not want" is its heart's belief,
What does it know of dangers or grief,
Led by the Shepherd's guiding?

Guided to pastures of tender grass,
Where still water floweth,
And what though the nether springs be dry?
With Him is the fountain of supply,
For the source he knoweth.

. . . . .

Childhood is over; a Lamb no more,
Far, far it is straying,
The mire of sin on its snowy fleece,
A stranger now to the paths of peace,
Its childhood's guide betraying.

But see, for the Shepherd follows still,
Though the worst he knoweth;
The hands that were pierced stretch out to aid,—
Fallen one, grasp them, be not afraid,
Pardon his touch bestoweth.

And a new glad song of praise is heard,
Borne on love's grateful wings—
"He restoreth my soul, He sets my feet
In paths of righteousness new and sweet,"
This is the song he sings.

"Yea though I walk through the valley's gloom,
Dark with shadowy dread,
Peopled with all that a man most fears,
Phantoms of sickness, and death, and tears,
Hiding the sky o'erhead,
Yet will I fear not, for Thou art there,
That valley was trod by Thee,
Not willingly does Thy rod descend,
Its wounds are the chastenings of a friend,
Therefore it comforts me."

. . . . .

The heat of battle is over now,
The soldier is weak and old,
But a double glory lights his days,
Earth's setting sun and the dawning rays
That stretch from the land of gold.

Enemies stand in powerless rage,
Seeing his table spread,
The cup of love in His trembling hold
Brimmeth with mercies manifold,
And God's oil shines on his head.

The goodness that held his childhood's hand,
The mercy then that found him,
Shall surely follow him all his days,
Till the great "for ever's" ceaseless praise,
In God's house surround him.

EVENING QUIET.

Wonderful stillness, calm and refreshing,
After the pleasure and toil of the day,
As though some angel, with finger uplifted,
Had hushed all disturbance and clamour away.

Drink in the sunset's varying splendour,
Ponder the marvels of form and of hue;
Sure that the Maker and Lover of beauty
Regardeth and loveth His workmanship too.

Think of the wanderer, distant and lonely,
This is the hour that his home seems most dear,
Kind faces smile on him still in his fancy,
And loving home messages ring in his ear.

Stillness of evening, thine is a quiet
Morning and noonday can never attain,
Lay thy cool hand on the head of the weary,
And soothe with thy restfulness sorrow and pain.

THE VOICES OF SPRING.

Oh, spring has many voices,
  Gentle and sweet and low,
The trickle of hidden water
  In meadows where mosses grow ;
The coo of the dove to his happy mate,
  Or the whispering of the breeze,
With the mem'ry of winter in its breath
  As it passes among the trees.

Oh, spring has many voices,
  Merry, and young, and gay,
The baa of the lambs at evening,
  The laughter of children's play ;
The farm-lad's cry as he turns the plough,
  And furrows the hardened ground,
The twittering chatter of thirteen chicks
  O'er some treasure that they have found.

Oh, spring has many voices,
  But its sweetest are surely birds ?
Daintiest trillings and warblings —
  Wonderful "songs without words."
And the lowly hum of the insect world
  Adds its mite to the choir of praise—
Gratitude's song for the present hour,
  Hope's song for the coming days.

SUNRISE.

The day is coming, and all the east
  Is golden as harvest grain,
The clouds that are near have caught the glow,
  And mirrored it back again.

Like brooding birds, on the sky they rest
  Their breasts soft-feathered with rose,
And o'er gleaming east and glooming west
  Is written the word "repose."

Yet lieth the earth-line dark and stern,
  A landscape in black and white ;
But from out its keeping a little bird
  Strays through the growing light.

Only a speck—but it moves and soars,
  Only a speck—but it sings ;
And though its song cannot win to me,
  I know that the morn it brings.

P. BARRIE

IS a native of Bridgeton, Glasgow, where he was born in 1833. When only ten years of age he was deprived of both parents. He was, however, carefully brought up by an aunt, and received a good education. Mr Barrie, who lived within the bounds of Glasgow until he was over forty years of age, was thirty-four years connected with the railway system, and was most of that time in a position of trust and responsibility. He has not, by any means, allowed the strong trammels of the "monster steamway" to shut him out from the pleasures of imagination and love of country life. We find ample evidence of this in several of his poems, in which he shows that he has a warm love of Nature, good powers of imagination, and fair descriptive ability. Mr Barrie takes a warm interest in evangelistic work. He was for seven years a director of the Glasgow Foundry Boys' Religious Society, and was for many years an occasional member of the Glasgow Choral Union, both as a vocalist and a violinist.

RAMBLES.

'Tis the end of the week, let's away to the hills,
Where we breathe the sweet air of the bracken and bramble,
We are weary of thinking, and driving of quills,
Let us out for a glorious afternoon ramble.

'Mongst the old oaks of Cadzow, the white cattle stray,
And browse by the deep shady coverts so green;
How pleasant these solitudes, broomy and gay,
Where wild flowers enliven and sweeten the scene.

Sweet scenes glad the eye—song-birds fill the ear,
Drawing near to old Kenmuir—o'erhanging the Clyde,
Such warblings around it is pleasant to hear,
While we wander at will by the swift running tide

There a fisher is plying his craft all alone,
Reflected in water, he looks all forlorn,

Absorbed in his art, he seems still as a stone,
And heeds not the clouds that betoken a storm.

By the green woods of Calder, its bonny hillside,
There are sweet nooks where wandering footsteps may rest,
In the deep grassy shade and the landscape spread wide
There is solace for toilers with labour oppressed.

Then out from the bustle and din let us hie,
And in rambles round Glasgow find each pleasant sight,
Whether eastward, or westward, or farther, or nigh,
Let us seek in the sunshine sweet scenes of delight.

BOYHOOD IN OLD GLASGOW.

In the gloaming hour, when all is hushed,
I think on days gone by ;
Old scenes recur at memory's call,
And distance seems quite nigh.

There was quiet and peace in the old city streets,
Where now is bustle and din,
The bairns knew naught of vicious speech,
Nor sights of shame and sin.

I remember with pleasure the Clyde's green banks,
With wild flowers gaily blooming,
Where now the harbour's crowded ranks
Of vessels are largely looming.

The quiet hedged roads of the former time
Are now streets in endless ranges ;
Oh how my heart seeks back the past
From out the many changes.

The friends of early days are now
Wide scattered, some "gone home,"
I people with them scenes of old,
And will not let them roam.

On sunny summer days we met
Montgomerie's wood to explore,
We swam the Kelvin's silvery stream,
And heard the millwheel's roar.

Polluted Kelvin's stream, ah me !
We dare not approach it now,
But in the old time sweet it flowed,
O'erhung by the leafy bough.

It watered the brackens and yellow broom,
It babbled o'er stony steeps,
Round rocky and mossy bends it curved
In graceful gliding sweeps.

We culled bluebells in childish glee,
Soon to be thrown away,
The golden hours passed off in joys
We wonder at to-day.

Town boys, we prized the merry songs
Of birds on every tree,
With cap in hand we strove to catch
The butterfly and bee.

On mossy braes we loved to lie,
And bask in sunny leisure,
On every hand was wealth of means
To pass our hours in pleasure.

Oh bright is the morning's glowing sky,
And the evening's western glory,
But brighter's the gleam that memory sheds
On the page of young life's story.

INCHMARNOCK ON THE DEE.

I love the north, where the strong winds blow,
And the girdling hills are oft clad with snow,
Where streamlets glitter on hill and fell,
And bees seek the sweets of the heather bell.

The wild deer herd on the heathery hill,
Among green spots the hill flocks roam at will,
The quick-winged game flies with startled cry
To mossy dens far from human eye.

From lofty Black Crag the eye's wide sweep
Views hill top, and corrie, and valley deep;
We dwell on the pictured scene afar,
The fertile fields of fair Cromar.

There is health in the breath of the mountain air,
That sweeps o'er Mount Keen or dark Lochnagar;
We seek with joy the hill's green crest,
With swinging step and extended breast.

Silver queen birches enliven the scene,
Relieving the brown hills with tender green,
The sounds all around us are chastened, mild,
By the depths of space in the landscape wild.

Again and again let me visit the place,
Where each feature of beauty I love to trace,
Let me leave the city's human tide,
And dwell 'mid thy solitudes, sweet Deeside.

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP, LL.D.,

THE late Principal of the United College of St Salvator and St Leonard, St Andrews, and Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, was born at Houstoun House, Linlithgowshire, in 1819. He claims our notice here mainly as the author of a work, entitled "Kilmahoe: a Highland Pastoral, with other Poems." Being a descendant of an old Scottish family, he inherited the feelings and spirit of the Highlander, and retained them strongly and ardently throughout life, even though his residence in the South might have tended to give a change of tone to his thoughts. He was educated at the Edinburgh Academy, Glasgow University, and Baliol College, Oxford. After completing his curriculum with much distinction in the University of the latter city, he was appointed by the late Archbishop of Canterbury to one of the assistant masterships at Rugby School. In 1861 he was elected to the Chair of Humanity in the United College, St Andrews, and discharged the duties with such satisfaction that, on the death of Principal Forbes in 1868, he was appointed by the Crown Principal of that College. In 1867 he was elected by Convocation Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, succeeding to the Chair held in former years by John Keble and Matthew Arnold.

In the spring of 1885 Principal Shairp, finding his health failing, was induced to remove to the Riviera, in the hope of being benefitted by a change of climate. He returned in summer comparatively restored, and soon after revisited the scenes of his own cherished Argyleshire, trusting thereby to regain his strength. But, alas! the wearied frame was beyond restitution, and he died, after a brief illness, at Ormsay, in September, 1885. His last words were beautifully suggestive—"It is misty now, but there will soon be clear light."

Principal Shairp discharged the duties of his conspicuous and responsible position with dignity, fidelity, and acceptance. No one took a deeper interest in University affairs, and the recent Bills that were promoted in Parliament with the view of extending the usefulness of the Universities of Scotland received his most zealous support. He had a most sensitively delicate appreciation of poetry, and, says the *Spectator*, in referring to his death, "many of his judgments are remarkable not only for insight, but originality. His merit as a critic, which was both real and great, was partly obscured from his countrymen and the world by an accident. He had the moral antipathy to Burns, not unfrequent with those Scotchmen who know that Burns injured as well as interpreted the Scotch character, and his life of the poet betrayed a dislike so deep as to blind its author on points to the genius of his subject. The Principal was a man, nevertheless, of keen, and sometimes even tender, perception, and his criticisms will, with those who are competent to follow them, hold a place among the first. He was an ardent Wordsworthian, but retained independence sufficient to know that the most poetic among poets was also the one who had most inequalities in his genius." "Shairp," says Dr Donald Macleod—"poetic, contemplative, and pure as a saint—had drunk in the very soul of Wordsworth. He delighted in Nature. Armed with his

long hazel stick, and protected by his plaid, it was his custom to wander far and wide over Highland moors and among Border solitudes, sleeping in any shepherd's cot, and crooning as he walked some old ballad or Gaelic song. Modern 'progress' had little attraction for him, and he had less liking still for the so-called 'Broad' section of the Church, to which so many of his earliest and dearest friends more or less belonged."

Although a valued and attractive contributor to several of the higher class monthlies, nevertheless he was not a voluminous writer. He, however, was widely known as an author, his fame extending far beyond the bounds of his native country, and his published lectures will always retain a high place in literature. His work, entitled "Culture and Religion," evinces simplicity, as well as graceful and cultured expression—indeed, these were the striking characteristics of Principal Shairp's literary style. His "Poetic Interpretation of Nature," "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," and "Aspects of Poetry," betoken that Poesy was the breath of his life. "Robert Burns," in Morley's series of "English Men of Letters," was, as referred to by the *Spectator*, a somewhat unsympathetic and unsuccessful criticism of our national poet. But it is to "Kilmahoe" that the lover of Doric minstrelsy will turn to gain a fair estimate of his creative talent, and a true exposition of his powers as a bard. This work, and several exquisite lyrics, stamped him as a poet of a high order. "Kilmahoe" is a pastoral poem, intended to illustrate a manner of life that has now entirely passed away. It was published in 1866, and, conceived somewhat from the model of Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," has been recognised as a valuable addition to Scottish literature. It must, however, be admitted that, notwithstanding the faithfulness of the dialect that pervades the pastoral, and the fine rendering of the Scottish character therein, the poem remains comparatively unknown. This is

certainly to be regretted, for some of the lyrics interwoven here and there throughout it, and purporting to be sung by some of the characters delineated, have a quaintness that render them pleasing, and the gentleness of tone that at once touches the heart. "The Shealing Song," which we quote, may be cited as a sample of this. It is sung by Una, one of the females pourtrayed, and is thus described by the author—

> "It was a simple, yet a pleasing rhyme,
> Breathed from far mountains and a fading time."

Principal Shairp has done much for Scotland's Muse, and has left his own mark on the tablet of Scottish song. His poetical thoughts are rich in fancy and fraught with patriotic feeling. As might be expected, his poetry evinces a keen appreciation and an ardent love of the beautiful in external Nature, whether he treats of the imposing grandeur of earth, sea, or sky, or the tender beauties of the floweret, the melody of the woodland songster, or the murmur of the mountain stream. His thoughts are rich with pictures of life; and although at times the idea may not perhaps be particularly novel, the form of expression gives it a charm of freshness and a beauty of new setting.

THE SACRAMENTAL SABBATH.

. . . . .

Up the glen narrowing
  Inland from the eastern deep,
In the kirkyard o'er the river,
  Where dead generations sleep,
Living men on summer Sabbaths
  Worship long have loved to keep.

Lulled the sea this Sabbath morning,
  Calm the golden-misted glens,
And the white clouds upward passing
  Leave unveiled the azure Bens,
Altars pure to lift to heaven
  Human hearts' unheard amens.

And the folk are flowing
Both from near and far, enticed
By old wont and reverent feeling
Here to keep the hallowed tryst,
This calm sacramental Sabbath,
Far among the hills, with Christ.

Dwellers on this side the country
Take the shore-road, near their doors,
Poor blue-coated fishers, plaided
Crofters from the glens and moors,
Fathers, mothers, sons and daughters,
Hither trooping, threes and fours.

Plaids were there that only Sabbath
Saw, and wives' best tartan hoods,
Grannies' white coifs, and bareheaded
Maidens with their silken snoods;
Many-hued, home-woven tartans,
Brightening these grave solitudes.

You might see on old white horses
Aged farmers slowly ride,
With their wives behind them seated,
And the collie by their side;
While the young folk follow after,
Son and daughter, groom and bride.

There a boat or two is coming
From lone isle or headland o'er,
Many more, each following other,
Slowly pull along the shore,
Fore and aft to gunwale freighted
With the old, the weak, the poor.

The bowed down, the lame, the palsied,
Those with panting breath oppressed,
Widows poor, in mutch and tartan
Cloak, for one day lent them, drest,
And the young and ruddy mother,
With the bairnie at her breast.

. . . . .

While the kirkyard throng and thronger
Groweth, some their kindred greet;
Others in lone nooks and corners
To some grass-grown grave retreat,
There heed not the living, busy
With the dead beneath their feet.

Here on green mound sits a widow,
Rocking crooningly to and fro,

Over him with whom so gladly
To God's house she used to go ;
There the tears of wife and husband
Blend o'er a small grave below.

There you might o'erhear some old man,
Palsied, speaking to his son,
"See thou underneath this headstone
Make my bed, when all is done.
There long since I laid my father,
There his forebears lie, each one."

. . . . .

Sweet the chime from ruined belfry
Stealeth ; at its peaceful call
Round the knoll whereon the preacher
Takes his stand, they gather all ;
In whole families seated, o'er them
Hallowed stillness seems to fall.

There they sit, the men bareheaded
By their wives ; in reverence meek
Many an eye to heaven is lifted;
Many lips, not heard to speak,
Mutely moving, on their worship
From on high a blessing seek.

Some on gray-mossed headstones seated,
Some on mounds of wild thyme balm,
Grave-browed men and tartaned matrons
Swell the mighty Celtic psalm,
On from glen to peak repeated,
Far into the mountain calm.

Then the aged pastor rose,
White with many a winter's snows
Fallen o'er his ample brows ;
And his voice of pleading prayer,
Cleaving slow the still blue air,
All his people's need laid bare.

Laden with o'erflowing feeling
Then streamed on his fervid chant,
In the old Highland tongue appealing
To each soul's most hidden want,
With the life and deep soul-healing
He who died now lives to grant.

Slow the people round the table
Outspread, white as mountain sleet,
Gather, the blue heaven above them,
And their dead beneath their feet ;

There in perfect reconcilement
Death and life immortal meet.

Noiseless round that fair white table
'Mid their fathers' tombstones spread,
Hoary-headed elders moving,
Bear the hallowed wine and bread,
While devoutly still the people
Low in prayer bow the head.

. . . . .

Soon they go—but ere another
Day of hallowed bread and wine,
Some now here shall have ascended
To communion more divine,
Some have changed their old hill-dwellings,
Some have swept the tropic line.

THE MOORS.

O the moors, the moors, the purple moors!
It's pleasant there to be,
O'er lowne green dell, and breezy fell
In day-long wandering free.

Ay, wandering there with forehead bare,
To meet the westlin' wind,
Coming up thro' the dells o' the heather bells,
Frae the sea it has left behind.

To daunder wide, or on green hillside
To lie, nor count the time,
At ease to croon some auld warld tune,
And weave a sister rhyme.

While autumn showers skiff o'er the moors
And blinks o' sunny sheen
On the purple tint of the heather glint,
Or the bright green sward between.

There scream of wheeling whaup by fits
From far and near is borne,
On mossy flower the plover sits,
And pipes her note forlorn.

The Covenanter's grave is there,
With wild thyme overgrown,
And hallowed still are muir and hill
For that memorial stone.

There evermore, ye bees, hum o'er
The peasant martyr's grave,
Thy wail be heard, lone plover bird,
O'er Scotland's holy brave.

THE BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR.

Will ye gang wi' me and fare
To the bush aboon Traquair?
Ower the high Minchmuir we'll up and awa',
This bonny summer noon,
While the sun shines fair aboon,
And the licht sklents saftly doon on holm and ha'.

And what would ye do there,
At the bush aboon Traquair?
A lang dreich road, ye had better let it be,
Save some auld skrunts o' birk
I' the hill-side lirk,
There's nocht i' the warld for man to see.

But the blithe lilt o' that air,
"The bush aboon Traquair,"
I need nae mair, it's eneuch for me;
Owre my cradle its sweet chime
Cam' souchin' frae auld time,
Sae tide what may, I'll awa' and see.

And what saw ye there
At the bush aboon Traquair?
Or what did ye hear that was worth your heed?
I heard the cushies croon
Through the gowden afternoon,
And the Quair burn singing down the Vale o' Tweed.

And birks saw I three or four,
Wi' gray moss bearded owre,
The last that are left o' the birken shaw,
Whaur mony a summer e'en
Fond lovers did convene,
The bonny, bonny gloamins that are lang awa'.

Frae mony a but and ben,
By muirland, holm, and glen,
They cam' ane hour to spen' on the greenwood sward,
But lang hae lad and lass
Been lying 'neath the grass,
The green, green grass o' Traquair kirkyard.

They were blest beyond compare,
When they held their trysting there,
Amang thae greenest hills shone on by the sun,
And then they wan a rest,
The lownest and the best,
I' Traquair kirkyard when a' was dune.

Now the birks to dust may rot,
Names o' luvers be forgot,
Nae lads and lasses there ony mair convene :
But the blithe lilt o' yon air
Keeps the bush aboon Traquair,
And the luve that ance was there, aye fresh and green.

THE HAIRST RIG.

O how my heart lap up to her
Upon the blithe hairst rig,
Ilk morning comin' ower the fur,
Sae graceful, tall, and trig.
O the blithe hairst rig,
The blithe hairst rig ;
Fair fa' the lads and lassies met
On the blithe hairst rig.

At twal' hours aft we sat aloof,
Aneath the bielding stook,
And tently frae her bonny loof
The thistle thorns I took.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

When hairst was dune and neebors met
To haud the canty kirn,
Sae fain we twa to steal awa',
And daunder up the burn.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

The lammies white as new fa'en drift,
Lay quiet on the hills,
The clouds aboon i' the deep blue lift
Lay whiter, purer still.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

Ay, pearly white the clouds that night
Shone marled to the moon,
But nought like you, my bonny doo,
All earth or heaven aboon.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

The burnie whimpering siller clear,
It made a pleasant tune ;

But O! there murmured in my ear
A sweeter holier soun'.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

Lang, lang we cracked, and went and came,
And daundered, laith to part;
But the ae thing I daured na name
Was that lay next my heart.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

Fareweel cam' owre and owre again,
And yet we couldna sever,
Till words were spake in that dear glen
That made us ane forever.
O the blithe hairst rig, &c.

. . .

THE SHEALING SONG.

When the cry of the cuckoo is heard from the craig,
Then the milk on the kye will be flowing,
And we'll leave low Glen Spean, and up to Loch Treig
And his bonny green shealings be going.

On the birk comes the leaf at the glad cuckoo cry,
And green braird to upland and hollow,
Comes bloom to the hillside, and warmth to the sky,
And to the still lochan the swallow.

Then we'll gae and theck ower wi' fresh heather and fern
The auld bothies a' summer to be in,
Wi' our kinsfolk and neeboors, by edge of the burn
That sings down the lone Corrie-vrecan.

And we'll toil at the cheese and the butter sae fine,
By the hill flowers made fragrant and yellow,
While the barefooted bairnies in pleasant sunshine
Will be pulling the blaeberries mellow.

O the bonny Craignanach's ledges sae green!
It's the bonniest hill i' the Hielans,
As its green rocky shelves i' the sunset are seen,
Gleaming o'er the calm loch, frae the shealings.

And there, when the gloamin' fa's lonesome and lown,
Unseen the wild stag will be belling,
While louder the voice from its dark hollow down
Of Alt-coirie-eesan is swelling.

Then Donald, from ranging by balloch and ben,
Where the mists and ptarmigan hover,
Comes driving the milking goats down to the pen,
Where Morag is waiting her lover.

And they sing, as she milks, and, when milking is o'er,
Lang and late on the braeside they'll daunder,
And laith bid good-night at her ain bothy door,
Ilka day growing fonder and fonder.

But lang ere the hairst with its yellowin' corn
Ca's us doun to our hames by the river,
Will Donald and Morag the sure word have sworn
That makes their twa hearts ane for ever.

THE CLEARANCE SONG.

From Lochourn to Glenfinnan the gray mountains ranging,
Naught falls on the eye but the changed and the changing;
From the hut by the lochside, the farm by the river,
Macdonalds and Cameron pass—and for ever.

The flocks of one stranger the long glens are roaming,
Where a hundred bien homesteads smoked bonny at gloaming,
Our wee crofts run wild wi' the bracken and heather,
And our gables stand ruinous, bare to the weather.

To the green mountain shealings went up in old summers
From farm-town and clachan how mony blithe comers!
Though green the hill pastures lie, cloudless the heaven,
No milker is singing there, morning or even.

Where high Mam-clach-ard by the ballach is breasted,
Ye may see the gray cairns where old funerals rested,
They who built them have long in their green graves been sleeping,
And their sons gone to exile, or willing or weeping.

The chiefs, whom for ages our claymores defended,
Whom landless and exiled our fathers befriended,
From their homes drive their clansmen, when famine is sorest,
Cast out to make room for the deer of the forest.

Yet on far fields of fame, when the red ranks were reeling,
Who prest to the van like the men from the shealing?
Ye were fain in your need Highland broadswords to borrow,
Where, where are they now, should the foe come to-morrow?

Alas for the day of the mournful Culloden!
The clans from that hour down to dust have been trodden,
They were leal to their Prince, when red wrath was pursuing,
And have reaped in return but oppression and ruin.

It's plaintive in harvest, when lambs are a-spaining,
To hear the hills loud with ewe-mothers complaining—
Ah! sadder that cry comes from mainland and islands,
The sons of the Gael have no home in the Highlands.

REV. JOSIAH WALKER.

FROM a volume entitled "Memorial of a Country Vicar," published by R. Grant & Son, Edinburgh, mainly for the perusal of personal friends, we learn that the subject of this sketch was the youngest son of Josias Walker, Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow—the intimate friend and biographer of Burns. His mother was a daughter of Richard Bell of Crurie, Dumfriesshire. It is interesting to note that the father of Josias, the Rev. Thomas Walker, minister of Dundonald, Ayrshire, was the fourth son of the Rev. David Walker, who was in 1690 admitted minister of Temple, in Edinburghshire, and grandson of David Walker of Leslie, one of the two brothers whose prowess in the Covenanting cause, and their encounter with Archbishop Sharp therein, are among Wodrow's best fragments of history. David Walker of Leslie married a granddaughter of Elizabeth, daughter of John Knox, the reformer, and thus, by their paternal descent, the Walker family come of the blood, in direct line of the most famous of sixteenth century Scotchmen.

Josiah Walker was born at Perth in 1805, and remained there with his family until his father's appointment to Glasgow in 1816. In that year he entered the Glasgow Grammar School. On completing his course at the College, and his own classical studies, he became his father's assistant, until the death of the latter in 1831, preparing himself meanwhile for the ministry of the Scottish Church. Although from his earliest infancy he had been of exceedingly delicate physical organization—throughout his long life he never knew what is really robust health—he devoted himself with so much success to the study of Hebrew that he was not only able to take charge of the Hebrew

class for Professor Gibb in 1830-31, but on the vacancy of the Professorship in the following summer, he was, though only in his twenty-fifth year, nominated as a candidate. Failing, however, in his election, he resolved to enter Cambridge, and to seek orders in the English Church. Having gained here several important scholarships, and having been ordained Deacon in 1836, and Priest in 1837, he obtained his first curacy at Folksworth, a village in Huntingdonshire. Three years afterwards he was appointed to the sole charge of Stetchworth, in Cambridgeshire, where he at once assumed a place amongst rich and poor which none but a man of his vigorous intellect and strong enduring spirit and kindly courtesy of manner could hope to take.

A great trial, however, came upon him and his affectionate wife, who, by her cheerful, busy, and loving spirit, strengthened him in all his duties—public and private. Four children had been born to them, when there fell on them a succession of blows which cut deeply into domestic life. A solicitor, whom they had trusted with their united fortunes—small in themselves but enough for their modest needs—was found to have utterly betrayed his trust; and closely following on this came another misfortune, in which they lost all that was left in a rotten mining investment. Their many friends, however, were but too glad to support their sinking hearts, and to suggest a way of help. The sons of squires and clergy were growing up around them, and those who had learned Mr Walker's value considered that no better teaching and training could be desired than at his hands; the result was that Stetchworth Vicarage became the best known private tutor's house in all the country round.

In 1850 the adjoining vicarage of Wood Ditton became vacant, and the patron, the Duke of Rutland, at once offered it to Mr Walker. Here his life was a very full one; but unceasing energy in course of time told

on his weak constitution, and in 1860 his health first began to gave way. Among the friends of earlier years was Lord Ongley, and on this nobleman's death, in 1877, it was found that he had left a legacy which removed all care for the future, and enabled Mr Walker to remove with his two unmarried daughters to London, where, when his health permitted, he delighted to spend his days in such complete scholarly leisure as he had never known before among the books and collections of the British Museum.

The marriage of his eldest daughter, in 1879, to Mr Alexander Rogerson, of St Michael's Lockerbie, and the residence of his only sister in Edinburgh, drew him to end his days in the land of his birth. The end came peacefully in Edinburgh in 1882. When we consider his varied accomplishments, his scholarly training and acquirements, his love for all that was beautiful and inspiring in nature and art, it will be readily imagined that he at times cultivated the Muse. He, in his innate modesty, however, would have disclaimed any right to a place here. One who knows him well informs us that he left many valuable MSS., and that "he translated most beautifully into blank verse selections from 'The Iliad and Odyssey,' these being considered by competent authorities enough to tell the story clearly, and form a class book for non-classical readers. He also made exquisite renderings from other Greek poets, strikingly true to the text and character of the original. His MS. also included many tales and sketches, charades in the form of little dramas, sermons, &c." Mr Walker was also widely known as a graceful letter-writer, and his correspondence frequently took the form of rhyming epistles. His sense of humour was keen, and his spirit was ever bright and childlike.

We give several specimens of his Muse from "The Worker's Day" and other lengthy poems, and also from the memorial volume already referred to, which

is edited by his daughter, Mrs Rogerson, who in a note states that, should the volume excite sufficient interest to induce others, beyond the circle of personal friends, to purchase copies, the proceeds will be added to a fund which is being raised for the restoration of Wood Ditton Church—an object always prominent in the heart of her parent.

EXPERIENCE OF A BELIEVER.

Giver and Lord of Life,
O Comforter Divine,
With wave on wave of woe in strife,
Now sinks this heart of mine.

No token of Thy Power!
Yet once was Life in me,
When in each trial's hottest hour
I found fresh springs in Thee.

Thy Scripture voice of love
Still on my soul descends,
Soft as a mother's, who above
Some child's hot pillow bends.

Its over-fevered ear
Nor hears, nor prompts reply;
And from my heart, with mis'ry sere,
Thy dews, unblessing, fly.

Is then my spirit dead?
No; for a voice within
Declares, life given by Thee, ne'er fled
But at the touch of sin.

My groans, which no restraint
Can ever hide from Thee,
Of pain the voice, not of complaint,
Oh, are these sin in me?

Or sin my wasted strength,
That melts in shrinking fear,
As each hope fails me, that, at length,
Release and rest are near?

Oh, is it sin to pray,
With the incarnate Son,
"This cup pass from me," while I say
With Him, "Thy Will be done!"

THE TRUE RICHES.

Rejoice, yet as rejoicing not,
And as unweeping, weep;
Prize every blessing of your lot
As what you cannot keep.

This shadowy scene fades fast away,
So use it ere it fly,
As heirs of wealth that can't decay
And life that cannot die.

If faithless found in earthly dust,
Unmerciful, impure,
Shall God with you those riches trust
That evermore endure?

And friends below how vain to love
And seek no higher bliss,
If unsecured in worlds above
Love is but Fear in this.

THE REDUCED GENTLEMAN'S STREET SOLILOQUY.

There's Envy oft in Wisdom's sigh,
When, wealth and pleasure round him beaming,
He calls each smiling face a mask,
And says all joy is only seeming.

Be far from me the wretched mood,
Whose bitterness—to be relieved
Must seek whene'er a brother smiles
To find that in his heart he grieved.

Amid the radiant glance of youth
The lines of early care must trace,
And spy the furrows of remorse
In the old squire's benignant face.

The cushioned chariot hung so light
That scarce its weight the coursers feel,
Exulting as they prance along,
Chased by the ever flashing wheel;

The looks of ease or pleasure worn
By those who fill these chariots gay,
The soft young eyes whose glances fly
Like heavenly love in winged play.

Can sights like these my spleen excite,
In gay procession hurrying by?
Because no courser bounds for me,
Nor beams on me one tender eye?

I'd rather hail each joy that flies
Around those young ones in their spring,
Than bid my envious fancy try
To pluck a feather from its wing.

Though sorrowful my life and lone,
Mine, who have seen such happy days,
Why should I bid a clouded brow
Attract each passer's idle gaze.

No, I would cherish there a smile,
And if cold hope can none supply,
I'd court the light of former joy
To linger in my darkened sky.

The gay or busy pass me by
As they might pass a bush or tree,
Yet grudge I not, nor cry—"Who heeds
The sorrows of a wretch like me?"

Among those crowds there are, who haste
Beside the couch of pain to kneel,
Who still are found where sorrow calls
To soothe, console, support, or heal.

And eyes there are, that were I cast
Within their heav'n appointed sphere,
Could read my inward heart, and drop
Upon its wounds a soothing tear.

Spirits whose dearest offices,
E'en now, although unknown, I share,
When, for *all* sufferers of their race,
Ascends to heaven their fervent prayer.

There's woe enough in every lot,
Who but hath been the slave of pain?
What heart beats now so lightly, but
Must quiver in its grip again?

Yet, oh! some sparkling draughts of joy
In this dull life to all are given,
To bid us taste what pleasure is,
That we may seek it pure—in heaven.

. . . .

When first one mutual glance reveals
The spirit that was made for ours,
And bursting forth in new found words
Heart into heart impetuous pours.

What hidden graces, charms unknown,
In both enchanted hearts we greet,
Like mountain streams that ne'er disclose
Their richest beauties till they meet.

Oh, life is then twice life! so wild,
So bright, so full, its tide of bliss!
E'en one such day might make us prize
Life in a darker world than this.

Yes, there are hearts with every thought
In unison by Nature strung,
Love breathing there, such music makes
As needs no utterance of the tongue.

And sorrow's power it mocks, for though
The broken lyre can charm no more,
In bruised hearts this music swells
Even fuller, lovelier than before.

But now no love-inspired soul
Awakes in mine a kindred tone,
There sorrow reigns in fiercest power,
Untuned, untempered, and alone.

And thoughts of every hideous guise
Still raging there with anarch sway,
Stir up the Stygian clouds whose gloom
Sickens the cheerful eye of day.

. . . .

'Tis night, my chamber's lonely wall,
And each familiar object there
Have caught the language of my soul,
And teem with records of despair.

My lamp's officious light is quenched,
Though friendly darkness lies my way,
My feet each bourne and dingle know,
By night, familiar as by day.

As on by hut and hall I roam,
From each alike the glancing ray
Speaks of the hearth where mutual smiles
Reward the labours of the day.

Such are the brief domestic joys
For which long hours of toil are borne,
How worthy of the price—they know
Who o'er the lost possession mourn.

Stay, stay my spirit, fly not back
To scenes that can return no more,
If thou hast none to toil for now,
Still do thy task and God adore.

WATT.

Half the world's work is done on land and sea,
O sage, still present in thy work, by thee;
Nor had been done, nor dreamt of, nor the hands
And minds whose ministry it still demands,
In every busiest region of this earth,
Had found the world capacious of their birth;
Earth's chief material force unused would lie,
Had not the glance of thy divining eye
Seen forms unknown asleep in God's decree,
Of more than living power, and bid them be.
And yet the first of thine ungrateful kind
Who caught the treasures lavished from thy mind,
And in their use found more than looked-for gain,
Conspired to make thy hope of guerdon vain;
To bar thy right abused each rule of law,
Urged against justice each obscurest flaw,
Sought e'en to rob thee of thy noble fame,
And brand with piracy thine honoured name.
The galling strife—oh, victory dearly bought!—
Consumed ten years of thy great life of thought;
Yet not consumed, if by its fruits we know
That heaven-born life within which passeth show;
Which, still untarnished in immortal bloom,
Like Sinai's bush, no trial fires consume.
That out-door strife ne'er dimmed thy genial cheer,
Nor barbed thy speech one day in one long year.
Bright as some Midland brook in changeful play,
Still flowed thy converse on its sunny way;
Too deep for any angry surge to show
How rough the bed of secret thought below.
When let and hindered most, thy sleepless wit,
Ever fresh mines of rich invention hit;
As quick to find, as generous to impart,
Help to thy kind in every field of art.
The sweetener thou of life to all around,
Sure aid in thee all struggling genius found.
When, thus beneficent, thy course was run,
No good, thy gifts empowered to do, undone,
How meet those smiles whose tranquil lustre shed
Peace on each mourner round thy dying bed!

A SONG OF PRAISE.

All praise to Him who moveth all
In heaven, and earth, and sea,
His great example is our call,
Sole sleepless worker He.

Let no man count our calling mean,
Christ was a worker too,
With saw and plane, ere time was seen
His higher work to do.

Earth's mean ones are her sons of sloth,
Her idlers, rich or poor,
While here, unprofitable both,
Unmissed, when here no more.

Defrauders both, of Him who gave
The life they fool away;
True men, king, lord, plebeian, slave,
Work every working day.

AGNES MABON

SUPPLIES another bright example, amongst several we have had the pleasure of introducing to our readers, of Scottish poetesses of Nature, who, under every possible difficulty and disadvantage, have enriched our national minstrelsy by composing thoughtful and sweet utterances, refreshing and grateful as the delicious fragrance of the mountain heather.' She was born in 1841 in the old farm house of Lochtower, in the Parish of Yetholm. Her father, whose name was Peter Stuart, was overseer on the farm. He died very suddenly when she was about two years of age, and her only brother just three months old. Shortly after her father's death, her mother removed with the family into the village of Town Yetholm. There,

when little more than four, she was sent to the parish school— having previously been taught to read by her mother. She was thus soon afterwards promoted to the New Testament Class, the Bible Class, and "White's Collection." The family next removed to Jedburgh, where she continued at school till she was thirteen, at which age she went to work in a mill, where she remained until her marriage.

Mrs Mabon, while engaged rearing a young family, has proved herself a good wife and loving mother. She often suffers from weak health, and we regret to learn that she has been for a number of years confined to bed with a spinal complaint, and at times is afflicted with great bodily suffering, which prevents her from writing. She has, however, continued to persevere with her own self-culture, and has been a frequent contributor of prose sketches of considerable literary merit, and numerous poems of much tenderness and power to several well-known periodicals and magazines—notably "The Dayspring," (Paisley, J. & R. Parlane), under the initials "A. M." She has also been successful in obtaining prizes for tales, &c., in the *People's Friend* and other literary journals. Of a modest and retiring disposition, she informs us that she has never yet "aspired to the name of poet. I am content to say of my poor attempts, as my little boy said of a chance couplet of his own. When he was certainly not more than four years old, his ear caught the jingle of rhyme, and he immediately called out 'Mind that's no poetry—its just a wee bit bad, bad metre.' On looking over things that I wrote long ago, and that I thought good at the time, I now feel ashamed; and this is how I am always reluctant to be 'seen in print.'"

Mrs Mabon's productions cannot he read without pleasure and profit. In them we find pathos, tender and refined, that goes direct to the heart, while her moral reflections and Christian sentiments are ever catholic in

spirit and thoroughly sincere. We are pleased to learn that it is probable that a selection of her writings may appear in a volume at an early date. These will be much appreciated, containing, as they do, much that is calculated to advance the moral welfare and elevation of the people.

OUR BABY.

Only a year since baby came,
One little year;
And yet how dear to all our hearts,
How very dear.

Only a little white, white head
So smooth and bare;
And yet how fair in all our eyes,
How very fair.

Only a little hungry mouth,
Cares but to eat;
And yet there surely never was
A mouth so sweet.

Only a pair of soft mild eyes
Of greyish blue;
Yet wearing to the eyes of love
Heaven's brightest hue.

Only a pair of tiny hands
That love to scratch,
And yet we think in all the land
Is not their match.

Only a little baby tongue
With prattling talk;
Only a pair of chubby feet
That cannot walk.

Only a living, loving babe,
Yet God hath given
Our little one a soul, which we
Must train for heaven.

MY OWN TRUE LOVE.

Wee, wee is my own true love,
Like other jewels of priceless worth;
But rather would I have her dear heart's love
Than all the treasures of all the earth.

Fair, fair is my true love's face,
A flower bright in a sunny land;
And her sweet, kind smile has a witching grace,
More potent far than fairy's wand.

Big, big are my true love's eyes,
Soft as velvet, and dark as night—
As beautiful night with star-gemmed skies,
Pure liquid worlds of love and light.

Wee, wee is my true love's mouth,
Sweet as honey, and rosy red;
Oh! were I a bee I'd forsake the flowers
And feast on these luscious lips instead.

Sweet, sweet is my true love's voice,
Silvery-toned, yet soft and low;
No music can Nature or Art produce,
Like the low faint "yes" that thrilled me so.

Big, big, is my true love's heart,
Big for a form so slim and wee;
Yet strange, is it not? in its true, true core
She says there is room for none but me.

THE SONG OF THE LINNET.

In a bush a bird was singing,
And methought I heard him say,
"I'm only a humble birdie
In a suit of sober grey,
And yet I'd not exchange it
For a gold and purple vest;
For the One who made me knoweth
Just the shade that suits me best."
"Yes, He knoweth, and I'm happy,"
Was the chorus of his song;
"Oh! as happy, happy, happy,
As the summer day is long."

Though my home is very lowly,
Still he sang, "I envy not
The eagle in his eyrie;
I'm contented with my lot:
For the One who gave me instinct
How to build my little nest,
Taught me that a humble dwelling
Suits a modest birdie best."
"So I am content and happy,"
Was the chorus of his song;

"Yes, as happy, happy, happy,
As the summer day is long."

"Well I know," he warbled sweetly,
"I'm no highly gifted bird—
That my notes are few and feeble—
Scarcely worthy to be heard.
Yet my family love to listen
While I sing beside my nest,
And the One who taught me knoweth
That I do my very best."
"So I'll praise Him and be happy,"
Was the chorus of his song;
"Yes, as happy, happy, happy,
As the summer day is long."

"No barn or storehouse have I
To contain a grain of seed,
But the Faithful One hath promised
To supply my every need.
So I'll pick my daily portion,
With a thankful little breast,
Simply trusting for the morrow
Unto Him who knoweth best."
"Yes, I'll trust him and be happy,"
Was the chorus of his song;
Oh! as happy, happy, happy,
As the summer day is long."

"What though dangers lie around me,—
Hidden snares I cannot see,
He who careth for the sparrow
Will watch over little me.
He who loveth all his creatures
Loves me too, among the rest,
So by trusting him each moment,
I will try to please Him best."
"Yes, I'll trust him and be happy,"
Was the chorus of his song;
"Oh! as happy, happy, happy,
As the summer day is long."

THE VALE OF BOWMONT.

The spot that to me seems the fairest on earth
Is the sweet vale of Bowmont dear place of my birth.
O, it thrills me wi' rapture, it melts me to tears,
E'en to think on the hame o' my earliest years.
The notes o' its wee birds sae blithely rang oot,
Its flo'ers were the brightest e'er scattered aboot,

Nae grass was sae green, an' nae lambs were sae white,
An' its skies were the bluest e'er gladdened the sight.
E'en a Bowmont-washed pebble seemed fairer to me
Than the costliest pearl e'er ta'en frae the sea.

What joy it would gi'e me aince mair to abide
In a snug little cot by its silvery tide;
To speel up yon brae, how delichtfu'—then rest
An' gaze on the spot still sae dear to my breast;
Yet I kenna, the auld place to me micht look strange,
For time since my youth maun hae wrocht a bit change.
The tall poplar trees that adorned the toon,
They tell me alas! hae langsyne been cut doon;
Yet viewing it still wi' the eye o' my mind
Ilk thing is the same, no ae change can I find.

The "loaning" I see where my young feet first strayed,
An' the sweet village green where sae often I played;
By my auld cottage hame stands the same rowan tree
That yielded such wealth of adornment to me,
An' the rose-tinted thorn I hail wi' delicht
Where the first buds of spring always burst on my sicht;
I can fancy nae change in my dear native hame,
To me it is ever an' always the same.
Thus, dearest an' fairest will aye be to me
The valley beloved that I'll never mair see.

IN CAULD, BLEAK DECEMBER.

In cauld, bleak December, 'mang wild driftin' snaw,
A wee starvin' lintie sits co'erin its lane;
Wi' hunger its neebors are drappin' awa',
An', wae's me, its love has the greedy gled ta'en.

Though now ye sit shiverin' sae cheerless an' dowie,
Short while sin' the whinny haugh rang wi' yer glee,
Ye puir lanely creature, my heart's bleedin' for ye,
An' fain wid I coax ye to come hame wi' me.

Laith, laith wid I be my wee birdie to tak' ye,
When sportin' 'mid plenty the lang summer day,
But in the cauld winter how happy I'd mak' ye,
If ye'd but consent in my cottage to stay.

Oh! come to this bosom when friendless, forlorn—
When puir and forsaken, ye're welcome to me;
Oh! ne'er can I look on the starvin' wi' scorn,
For hunger and cauld maun be sair, sair to dree.

Then trust me, dear birdie, I wadna deceive ye,
A' winter I'll tend ye wi' love an' wi' care,
An' if in the spring-time ye're willin' to leave me,
Ye shall get awa', though I'll miss ye richt sair.

Your cage-door I'll open when saft breezes blaw,
A chance ye shall then ha'e for sweet liberty,
To your ain bonnie knowes ye may then flee awa',
A captive unwilling shall ne'er stay wi' me.

ALICK MURRAY

WAS born in 1856 at Peterwell, in the "Howe o' Fyvie," Aberdeenshire. He ranks tenth in a family of fourteen, who have all reached the estate of man and womanhood. His "forbears" resided for centuries in Keith, and he comes of a long-lived race. His parents are still alive, but very frail from the infirmities of age and a life of incessant toil, consequent on rearing such a numerous family. There is nothing of special interest to record regarding the early days of the subject of our sketch, beyond the fact that in childhood he once narrowly escaped drowing in the well from where the family drew their water supply. He was fortunately rescued by his mother, who had been busy baking oat cakes, "but felt impelled to go to the well for water, though she said she was not actually in want of it." A little later on he nearly succeeded again in ending his career by eating berries from a Daphne shrub that grew in a corner of the garden. His life was saved by the prompt action of a neighbour. At the age of six Alick was sent to the Parish School, which he attended for several years, after which he learned gardening at Fyvie Castle. On the expiry of his apprenticeship he went to Scot's House, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, whence,

having gained considerable experience, he removed to York, and subsequently followed his calling at several gentlemen's places near Bangor, Edinburgh, Anniston, Airthrey Castle, Dollar, &c., contributing verses to the newspapers of the various districts, including the *Stirling Observer*, the *Tillicoultry News*, &c., until, in 1881, he was appointed gardener to S. Bennet, Esq., Holmdale, Leicester, in whose service he still remains.

Mr Murray, in 1885, published a handsome volume of his poetical productions, which has been well received. It shows that his Muse is of a versatile nature, that his mind is of a reflective and observant cast, and that he can paint odd characters in a few words, and with pithy and jovial humour. His introduction to the volume is certainly brief—

Here, void o' preface lairge an' lang,
Or dedication's glib harangue,
My Musie to th' warl' gangs forth,
As best she may, for what she's worth ;
To him that caresna to peruse
I needna fash to mak' excuse ;
To those that patronise an' read it,
A puir excuse is naewise needit !

WARSLE UP THE BRAE.

I'm something just like ither folk
Ye'll meet wi' day by day,
O' wealth I've but a scanty stock,
Yet aye what clears my way ;
Sae I seldom mourn or mak' complaint,
I bear thro' weal an' wae ;
An' daily strive to coort content
To warsle up the brae !

My nee'bours may hae mair than me,
I grudgena them their whang ;
Wi' richt gude will my mite I gie
When poortith comes alang ;
An' if I can mak' by honest dint,
'Tis pleasant aye to hae ;
Sae I eident strive an' coort content
To warsle up th' brae !

We canna a' hae rowth o' gear,
Some guidens weel their share ;
But if poverty demeans us here,
Discontent degrades us mair !
Let's wisely tak' th' talent lent
An' try to mak' it twae
By faithfu' toil, oor hearts content
To warsle up th' brae !

SADNESS—GLADNESS.

Summer's golden hours have sped,
Summer's gorgeous flowers are dead ;
Song hath from the forest fled—
Fled each voice of gladness.
Autumn leaves—sere, brown, and red—
On each woodland path lie dead ;
Wintry clouds sweep over-head—
Sullen shades of sadness !

The hours have sped—their brightness gone !
The flowers are shed—their fragrance flown !
The warblers of the grove are hushed,
Their joys are chill'd—and mine are crushed.

Vanished all my fairy dreams,
Darkened those bright smiling beams ;
From vain-hope's delusive gleams
Not a spark I borrow ;
On a wintry path alone,
Wither'd leaves around me strewn—
Dreary winds about me moan—
Misery—harping sorrow.

Fair smiles withheld, fair hopes blighted,
Life's dream dispell'd, love unrequited,
A fair face received, a false heart deceived,
The winter I grieved, springtide revived.

Winter's surly gloom has fled ;
Spring, with vernal beauties clad,
Revels in the leafy glade—
Wantons in her gladness !
Thro' the woods I lightly tread,
'Mong the flowers profusely spread,
With my love ; birdies warble over head—
Farewell to my sadness !

ANNIE.

The dew-gem'd rose o' pearly dawn
Its parent stem adorning,

Is kiss'd by Sol when o'er the lawn
He smiles the fair June morning.
The bonnie bud, sae chaste an' fair,
Is fragrantly inspiring ;
But dearer beauty gives me care
My heart is more desiring.

The daisy wakes her golden eye
To catch the morning's genial smile ;
But brighter orbs invoke my sigh,
And charm with more betwitching wile.
Yon brilliant star, first gem of eve,
That cheers th' way-worn weary,
Tells me the hour that I maun leave
A' else an' meet my dearie.

Tho' far aboon my feeble stretch
The evening stars blink bonnie,
There's ae bright star within my reach
That guides my steps to Annie.
An' bright an' warm as morning's smile
The happy glance that greets me ;
Fair as the rose, an' free o' guile,
The bonnie lass that meets me.

The glistening beads o' lucid dew
That gem the queenly blossom,
Reflect the virtues pure an' true
That grace my lassie's bosom.
An' Sol may kiss the fragrant rose
When morn is young an' bonnie,
But morn an' noon an' evening's close
Be mine to lo'e my Annie.

"AQUA VITÆ."

'Tis clear as the crystal, "the real mountain dew,"
'Tis the fair and the false, 'tis the friend that's untrue ;
'Tis the solace of sorrow, the lotion of care,
'Tis thy horror to-morrow, remorse, and despair,
'Tis the source of foul pleasure, thy stream false delight,
That widens and deepens to the confines of Night !
'Tis the tyrant, O Slave ! that oppresses thy health,
A consumer of life, and a waster of wealth :
Tis the misery of home and the woe of the wife,
'Tis the ruin of love, 'tis the spirit of strife ;
It widows the mother and orphans the child,
And it drives godly reason to the bleak raving wild :
It swells the dark annals of outrage and crime,
'Tis the increase of evil, the sad curse of our time !
It multiplies lunacy, want, and disease,
Fills the workhouse and jail, brings the hangman his fees !

It poisons our morals, it fills us with shame,
It degrades, it dishonours, it blasts worth and fame:
'Tis condemned by the learned, who preaches of faith,
'Tis prescribed by the science that battles with death!
And preachers will sip, and doctors indulge,
Despite all the evils that truth may divulge!
'Tis allowed by the law, and its "limbs" oft imbibe,
'Tis pree'd by the judge and his quill-driving scribe;
'Tis the cause of the beggar who shivers in rags,
Foul murder and suicide lurks in its dregs;
'Tis the cause of assault and the death in the street,
And the heart-rending fates that its slave-victims meet!
If the water of life, as the Latin implies,
Why is Death still the victor, that its best patron dies?

I'M WEARIED SAIR.

I'm wearied sair o' bachelor life,
And sigh for maiden pity;
But fient-o-me can get a wife,
In clachan, toon, or city!!

I seek a lass wha'd constant prove,
An' soothe me when I'm weary;
I redde ye she'll get a' my love—
My only dawtit dearie!

My bosom's fu' o' love sae het,
Th' lowes I scarce can bear them;
But ne'er the lassie can I get—
Nae bonnie lass to share them.

But here am I, among the fair,
As lone as onie Adam,
Wi' socks an' sarks to gi'e me care,
But ne'er a help-meet madam!

They smirk, an' smile, an' saftly sing,
An' sigh o' love, to tease me;
But when I speak o' buyin' the ring,
The looks they gi'e maist freeze me!

I sometimes threat to gang an' droon,
Or 'list an' be a sodger;
Or wi' a gas-pock reach the moon,
An' be her second lodger!

They rigg sae braw, an' gab sae fine,
The dear inconstant creatures;
They'd a' be cherubs right divine,
Had they but angel-natures!

RODERICK LAWSON.

THE Rev. Roderick Lawson is minister of the West Parish of Maybole, Ayrshire. He was born in Girvan, and was brought up to his father's trade till he was eighteen years old. Anxious to improve himself, he left home, and was enrolled as a student in the Glasgow Normal School, where he studied for a year and a half. Distinguishing himself at the Government Examinations there, he was succesively appointed to schools at Falkirk and also Blantyre—the birthplace of Dr Livingstone. Having saved a little money through teaching, he entered the University of Glasgow, and afterwards that of Edinburgh, where he finished his Divinity studies. His first ministerial appointment was as assistant to the Rev. John Macleod, of Govan, then pastor of Newton-on-Ayr. From this post he was speedily removed to his present charge, to which he was ordained in 1863.

Mr Lawson is not only held in much esteem by his attached congregation as a thoughtful and earnest preacher, but he is widely known as the author of several popular and eminently readable works. His sketch of the "Homes and Haunts of Robert Burns" is favourably known as an important contribution to the literature of our National Bard, while his "Crossraguel Abbey," and "Maybole Past and Present," (Paisley: J. & R. Parlane), are useful and charming little works, evincing careful research, and fine literary taste. They are lighted up by short pieces of verse on local subjects and curious characters—the latter containing many pithy anecdotes and descriptive matter on quaint old customs.

Mr Lawson, in his student days, wrote a "Commntary on the Shorter Catechism," whose circulation is counted by the hundred thousand, and more recently he has published a number of books for the

religious education of youth. On such occasions as the annual soiree of his Sabbath School he is in the habit of writing racy snatches for the boys to recite. So popular have these become that a selection of them has been published by the Messrs Parlane. We have referred to the fact that he is an earnest, hard-working Christian minister, but he is also well-known as a public lecturer on popular topics. It was only after the very urgent solicitations of several friends that Mr Lawson would allow his name to appear in this work, and he did so reluctantly. He considers himself merely a "rhymer or versifier," but the following selection will show that he is possessed of keen poetic feeling, and that he utters his thoughts with real felicity and charm of expression. He is always tender and sympathetic, but occasionally manifests a vein of telling humour and quiet pawkiness.

OOR AIN BIT TOON.

Oor toon may be sma' in the thinkin' o' ithers,
It may na hae ony great story to tell,
But a glamour hangs owre it to us wha dwell in it,
Which maks it kenspeckle—a place by itsel'.
Its hooses may no be sae stately as mony,
Its streets and its lanes may be narrow in boun',
But the fact that we bide in't mark'st oot frae a' ithers,
And gars us think much o' oor ain bit toon.

The hills that stan' round it may no be the highest,
The streams that rin by it may be shallow and few,
The roads and the paths that lead from it and to it
May seem bare and common to ither folks' view;
But to us wha hae seen them in gladness and sorrow,
There's nae place 'mang a' the places aroun'
Whase sichts and whase shows hae such beauty and meaning
As the sichts and the shows o' oor ain bit toon.

A man may hae wandered to mony braw places,
But there's only ae place he can ca' his ain hame,
And that place is sacred—it's no like the ithers;
They may be far grander, but never the same.
For oor hame is the spot in this wilderness warld,
Whaur the life maun be leeved that's to tak' us aboon,
It's the place in the battle o' life we've been posted,
To stan' for oor Master—oor ain bit toon.

We may look and may lang for some greater station,
Whaur we think we could better oor talents display,
But here or nowhere must we face what's assigned us,
Just here or nowhere must we carry the day.
Sae let us tak up the task that's gien to us,
And let us work at it till life's en' comes roun',
And we'll yet thank the Father wha met us and blessed us
'Mang the hamely concerns o' oor ain bit toon.

ROOM FOR THE BAIRNS.

"Room for the bairns!" cried the Master o' a',
"Room for the bairnies wee;
The youngest on earth is as dear to My heart
As the auldest ane can be.
For what are ye a' but bairns in His sicht
Whase years dae last for aye?
Then room for the bairns, let them come to Me!
Let nae ane say them nay."
"Room for the bairns!" cried the Master o' a',
"Gather the lambs to My fauld;
There's room for ilk ane in the hame abune;
For the young as weel as the auld."

"Room for the bairnies! for why should the auld
Think nocht o' those that are wee?
Their angels behold My Father's face,
Then why not come unto Me?
In the mansions grand o' My Father's house,
Where saints and angels wait,
They've a' got the hearts o' bairnies there,
For the meek alane are great."

Sae, He took them up in His ain dear arms,
And set them on His knee;
And He laid His hands on their heids sae sma',
And bless'd them tenderlie;
And He tauld them clearly, ane and a',
If they would be forgiven,
That the auld maun become like bairns again,
Else they'd ne'er see His face in heaven.

JOHNNIE STUFFIE.

A queer wee man, wi' simple air,
Was Johnnie Stuffie,
Weel kenn'd alike by rich and puir
Was Johnnie Stuffie.
The water-carrier o' the toon,
The messenger to a' aroun',
And the butt o' every idle loon
Was Johnnie Stuffie.

Nae common bonnet croon'd the head
O' Johnnie Stuffie,
But auld lum-hat was there instead
To Johnnie Stuffie;
A lang great-coat, ance thocht genteel,
Aye wrapped him roun' frae neck to heel,
Which only did the feet reveal
O' Johnnie Stuffie.

On Sabbath days, first at the kirk
Was Johnnie Stuffie,
Wi' weel brushed hat and weel washed sark
Cam' Johnnie Stuffie;
Yet no amang the rest sat he,
But on the pulpit steps sae hie,
The congregation a' could see
Bauld Johnnie Stuffie.

But a' folks dee, and 'mang the lave
Maun Johnnie Stuffie,
He rests noo in his quiet grave,
Wee Johnnie Stuffie;
Nae mair he'll stand the idle jeer,
Nor answer gie baith quaint and queer:
Though girr and water-stops are here--
Whaur's Johnnie Stuffie?

THE AULD SCHULE.

O the Auld Schule, the Auld Schule,
What though the place was wee!
O happy hearts were gathered there
When life was fu' o' glee.
The playground is deserted noo,
Thy wa's are silent a',
But mony a happy memory
Does that Auld Schule reca'.

O the Auld Schule, the Auld Schule!
Thy forms were gettin' frail,
Thy desks were rough and shaky too,
Thy floor was like to fail.
But richt gude wark was done in thee,
And lessons taught wi' skill,
And clever men and women bright
Were trained in that Auld Schule.

O the New Schule, the New Schule!
Ye're unco fine and crouse,
Ye're a great credit to the toon,
Oor ain new, grand Schulehoose.

But the Auld Schule, the Auld Schule!
Forsaken though ye be,
There ne'er will be a New Schule
Will seem the same to me.

THE SPOOT IN THE GLEN.

. . . . . .

It's no vera big—it's jist a *wee* spoot
That comes oot o' the breist o' the brae,
But it's sweet, and it's cule, and it's pure as the snaw
That comes frae the clouds far away.
And it's free to a' comers—the bairns wi' their cans,
And a' folks aboot the West en';
Even the rouch carter lads will pu' up their carts
And tak' a gude swig at the Glen.

There's a great deal o' drink that's no vera gude,
And brings meikle sorrow and shame,
It steals awa' health, and your money to buit,
And lea's ye a sair ruined name.
But the Drink that I praise has nae siccan fauts;
It'll no land ye in the prison's dark den,
And ye'll no hae your heid sair, or your jacket in rags,
If ye stick by the Spoot at the Glen.

There's mony a ane in a far distant land
Wha minds hoo, in youth's sunny day,
They gaed wi' their stoups, and ca'd their bit crack,
At the place whaur the wee Spoot's to-day.
And there's mony a ane's gane farther awa',
Wha asked on his deathbed to sen'
For a jug o' the cule, cule water that rins
Frae the wee trinklin' Spoot in the Glen.

And the wee Spoot aye rins, year in and year oot,
And it asks neither fame nor a fee,
Content if it slockens the drouth o' the weans,
And mak's your drap parritch or tea.
And the lesson it teaches to young and to auld,
Frae childhood to threescore and ten,
Is, "Do what ye can, and ne'er think o' reward,"
Just like the wee Spoot in the Glen.

ANE'S AIN HAME.

There's no a place, gang whaur ye may,
Like ane's ain hame;
There's no a fireside half sae gay
As the ane at hame:

It may be wee, it may be puir,
It may hae little room to spare,
But still to ev'ry heart there's ne'er
A spot sae sweet as hame.

In this rough warld o' faucht and strife,
It's sweet to hae a hame—
A haven in the storms o' life,
A place o' calm at hame—
Whaur doors are shut on worldly din,
And cares are banished, ilka ane,
And nane but friens are gathered in—
The friens o' ane's ain hame.

Whan ance oor life's bit journey's by
We'll get anither hame,—
A place o' rest beyond the sky,
A true and lastin' hame;
It is oor Father's house abune,
That open stands for ev'ry ane
Whase heart's washed free frae guilt and sin,—
A holy, peacefu' hame.

Some day we'll hae to tak' oor leave
O' this, oor earthly hame;
May God, then, in His love, receive
Us to His heavenly hame;
Whaur parted friens will gathered be
Aneath the Saviour's ain roof-tree,
To bide, thro' a' eternity,
Wi' Him at His ain hame.

HENRY CUNDELL

WAS the son of William Cundell, Esq., Leith, and was born in that place in the year 1810. Early in life he went to London, where he ever after resided. Amidst the duties and cares of business as a bank manager, his chief recreation was found in the enjoyment and cultivation of literature and art. He made skilful and beautiful use of the brush, when his

summer rambles led him amid the romantic beauties of Scotland or Wales, or when he sketched from memory, as he delighted to do, many a lovely scene as it

> "Flashed upon that inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude."

He wrote from time to time graceful and touching pieces, many of them drawn out by the sadness of domestic bereavements. He was possessed of taste and culture in a remarkable degree, and his love of Nature was ardent and never-failing. Next to this master-passion was his admiration of Shakespeare, whose works he had studied from boyhood with reverence and enthusiasm. In the latter years of his life, when he had retired from the cares of business, it was a labour of love which solaced him greatly to project and carry out the editing of "The Boudoir Shakespeare, carefully bracketed for reading aloud, freed from all objectionable matter, and entirely free from notes" (London: Sampson, Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington). During the year 1876-77, in this form, appeared "Cymbeline," "Merchant of Venice," "As You Like It," "King Lear," "Romeo and Juliet," "Twelfth Night," and "King John." It is a curious circumstance that the name Henry Cundell occurs in Shakespeare's will as that of a friend to whom he left a ring; and the subject of the present notice had many reasons for believing he could trace descent from this individual. The gentle life we have thus briefly sketched closed peacefully in the April of 1886.

LITTLE THINGS.

Think not, my soul, that little things
Can be unworthy of our love,
Or deem that poor, which haply brings
Hope for the lone breast from above.

Remembered sounds, however faint,
That waft a vanish'd presence near,

Fondly in loved colours paint
The countenance through life held dear.

The fragrance of a cherished flower
Link'd with hush'd words that thrilled the heart
Of joy recalls the mystic power
That but with life shall e'er depart.

Then little things still reckon dear,
A drop of dew, oh, ne'er despise,
That on the bloom distills a tear—
Its pearly, morning sacrifice.

O'er little children Jesus pray'd ;
Smallest of alms, the widow's mite ;
The lily statelier was array'd
Than Solomon at glory's height.

BURNS.

Within this shrine, upreared by loving hands,
'Tis sought to keep a cherished memory green
Of Scotia's Burns, long dear in many lands,
And o'er his genius cast a lasting sheen.
Dear Bard, farewell, in "Poet's Corner" now,
Where sole repose the worthiest and the best,
Thou art enshrined, and who would disallow
Thine honoured Bust its sanctifying rest?
Why need we laud thee! wherefore utter praise?
Beyond thy *name*, what nobler tribute raise!

TO BUNYAN.

All honour to thee Bunyan, who did'st stand
At utmost need within the breach of life,
Preferring bonds, dishonour, and the brand
That hireling judges, in corruption rife,
Did cast on thee ; nor child nor wedded wife,
Nor fear of death, could thy firm purpose shake,
Or from thy dauntless spirit wring consent
To hated forms. For thy dear Master's sake
To brave the gibbet thou hadst been content.
Begirt in panoply of heavenly mail,
All Satan's shafts fell harmless at thy feet.
Calm, undismayed, thro' the last darksome vale
Thou sped'st—the while in notes celestial sweet,
Thee, much-loved Pilgrim, countless angels greet.

JOHN PATERSON,

A VERSATILE writer, of a restless but progressive genius, has courted most of the arts and sciences with considerable success. Born in the heart of Glasgow in 1853, amongst the working classes, his recollection of school life is limited, for he had to begin early in the school of the world as a worker. He entered the telegraph service in 1866, and began to develop literary tastes—first as an amateur writer of songs, for one of which he obtained a prize. His next venture was a novel, to which task he devoted the leisure hours of two years. Mr Paterson had then a great love of the marvellous, and was ambitious to emulate Professor Anderson. After constant study he acquired such proficiency as to astonish even professionals by his conjuring tricks. When Government bought up the telegraph companies he transferred his services to the post office, and there he met some congenial spirits, who helped to cultivate and train his literary talents. Along with J. K. Christie, noticed in the First Series of this work, and James Brown, in Fifth Series, he attempted to establish a service magazine, entitled "Mercury's Missives," but although the first part was a literary success, for lack of encouragement the project fell through.

Mr Paterson is entirely self-taught, and has acquired fluency in the French language, a thorough knowledge of phrenology—of which science he is an earnest professor—proficiency as a violinist, and has covered the walls of his home with the productions of his artistic brush. He is the author of a small operetta that made a successful round of the provinces, and also a drama of considerable power. Mr Paterson's poetical contributions have appeared in the *People's Friend*, *Glasgow Herald*, and *Mail*, and various other well-known papers. His Muse is fertile and ingenious,

more especially his punning poems, which are really clever—some of them not unworthy of that prince of poetical punsters, Tom Hood. His more serious poems are full of good and strong feeling, and evince the critical, *dainty*, and careful writer.

TOWARDS THE DAWN.

Ho, ye that run the race
With panting breath and pace
That stumbles in its eagerness to fly,
Pause and let the crowd,
That cometh as a cloud
By fitful breezes tossed, go by.

Ho, ye that in the vale
Contend for God and Baal,
Whose life is worship, and whose worship fight,
Forget your "gather gain"—
Come, leave the crowded plain,
And view the battle from the altared height.

Come, stand amongst the few
Whose universal view
Looks down the ages with an angel's eye,
Sees man ambitious climb
Up through evolving time,
Towards the one perfection set on high.

See, where the local shades
In distant azure fades,
Where colours have assumed a common hue;
So seem the things that were,
The past is symbol'd there—
'Tis time that tones the tintings in the view.

With mingling shriek and song,
With quicksand life the throng,
Half-conscious of the prizes to be won,
With eager, anxious face
Pursues the heated race,
Upreaching, like the flowers, towards the sun—

Each linking as they flee
Some marvellous "To be"
With all the dim processions that have gone,
And each as arches span
New phases of one plan
Far-reaching unto some eternal dawn.

The three-fold tinted light
That flashes out of night,
A quivering attendance on the sun,
Again with mellow blends
A perfect prism, lends
A crowning glory when the race is run.

Does God thus symbolise
Upon the glowing skies
The Race returning to its holy prime—
That Eden shall arise
Through travailing of sighs
A birth of peace from out the pangs of time?

Say, Seer, what lights amaze
Thy rapt prophetic gaze?
Flash out the light to meaner men denied.
Seest thou the dawning ray
Of that elected day
When Earth shall rule amongst the glorified?

THE KISS—AND THE CRUEL MISS.

Our Tom was growing old, they said
The marks of Time were there,
For when our Tommy *bared* his head,
'Twas found his head was *bare.*

He was a little bald, you see,
And thought a little *dull,*
We wonder yet how that could be,
With such a *shining skull.*

And argued we, he isn't *bad,*
Altho' a little rude,
For once-a-week the careful lad
Puts something to the *good.*

His getting *old* was nothing *new,*
He'd still a polished 'air,
But he whose tastes were quite *too too,*
Was not inclined to *pair.*

That he was *blind* to womankind,
He wouldn't dare deny—
We understood it when we find
He had one in his eye.

They met—'twas in a crowded train,
He thought she caught his sigh,

And tho' he said "'Tis rather *wet*,"
She seemed a little *dry*.

A warming pan had come to *hand*—
She took it to her *feet*,
And what was rather *hard* to *stand*—
She took the *softest seat*.

"Ah! Miss," he thought, "the tunnel's dark,
And lips were made to kiss,"
But yet he feared to *miss* the mark,
And so to mark the Miss.

A moment more—'twas black as night,
And then he made the dash—
This *gloomy* fact was brought to *light*—
He'd kissed a strong moustache.

For like some Members whom we meet,
Whose faith is sorely tried,
The little maid *gave up her seat*,
And took the *other side*.

NATURE'S BEER.

See, ye weary, Nature's fountain
Flowing free to thirsty men,
See it glancing down the mountain,
Hear it singing in the glen;
Hear it lap the sandy reaches,
List the lesson that it teaches—
"Mine the mission to assuage—
I am Nature's beverage."
Lift aloft the glancing measure,
Quaff the universal cheer,
Praise the Lord for such a treasure—
Water is kind Nature's beer.

Hear it where the moonbeams quiver,
Hymning o'er the rugged stones;
Deeper, richer from the river
Comes the joyfulness it owns;
Low and lullabic it praises,
Grateful is the psalm it raises—
"For the simple and the sage
I am Nature's beverage."

Where the tinted lights are blending
Softly o'er the parched plain,
See the priestly cloud descending
With its ministry of rain,

See the breasts of Nature swelling,
Still unto the wayward telling—
"Pure and free to youth and age,
I am Nature's beverage."

Hail to thee, thou crystal treasure,
First among the gifts art thou,
Lending purity to pleasure,
Cooling to the fevered brow;
True physician in our sickness,
Tempting not to curse our weakness—
"To the simple and the sage
Cometh Nature's beverage."

KATE.

Kate was the belle of an ancient town,
Oh kind was her heart and merry,
Her hair was coiled in a golden crown,
Ruby her lips as the cherry;
Her cheeks were tinted a tender red,
Like the flush of a rosy dawn
Beware the saucy toss of her head,
Or your heart—or your heart is gone.

Kate was the pride of that ancient town,
But her heart knew no subduing;
Kate had an eye for a silken gown,
And laughed as the lads came wooing—
She laughed as she tossed her curls aside,
But her words came cruel and chill—
"Beauty should ne'er be poverty's bride,"
Yet sighed with a perverse will.

Kate chose the wealth of that ancient town,
And the lads had ceased to follow,
They knew that under her silken gown
Her heart quivered cold and hollow;
For false were the tales that wealth had told,
As false as her visions were fair,
And, e'en as a bird tho' caged in gold,
Katie pined for her native air.

HIS EMMA AND DILEMMA.

Well, then, beginning at the tale,
His lady-love was Emma,
He loved his *Emma* dear a deal,
But hated a dil-*emma*.

He lived, or rather lodged, you know,
Much nearer to the sky, then,
Than Emma dear, who dwelt below,
A candidate for *Hy*-men.

It happened when they chanced to meet,
And such was rather rare, Sir,
Tho' going *downwards* to the street,
They both got up a *stare*, Sir.

And latterly it came about—
One summer to the sand, Sir,
He kindly asked her *arm* out,
But never sought her *hand*, Sir.

How naturally after that
The little maid would chatter,
And when the talk grew *sharply flat*,
In *minor key* he'd flatter.

He talk'd of musical affairs,
She showed her newest feather—
At times to harmonize their *'airs*,
They'd put their heads together.

Still shy was he to see his part,
For love is ever blind, Sir,
And he who could *lay down* his heart,
Could not *make up* his mind, Sir.

At last—if circumstance would let—
He'd ask the maid by letter,
Quite positive she'd be, he *bet*,
Comparatively *better*.

On both sides of a quire he wrote,
In verse transcendant--utter—
He versified on *cream*-laid note,
And added also *butter*.

"If," said he to Commissionaire,
"You lose these billets-doux, Sir,
You shall di-*vest* the *coat* you wear;
He answered, "Very true, Sir."

Oh! joy, he press'd his Emma dear
That evening to his breast, Sir,
But soon, *alas!* it did appear
'Twas not a *lass* he press'd, Sir.

'Twas not his own that he embrac'd,
Oh! strange concatination;
It was an Emma that had graced
A former generation.

The matron had put in her claim
To emma-*late* the other,
And said she was a maid in name,
Altho' a widow'd mother.

There, gentle reader, let him be,
The fates have surely mock'd him,
We find our plot's without a *key*,
And therefore have we *lock'd* him.

WILLIAM STARK

WAS born at Anderston, Glasgow, in 1857, and is a descendant of Walter Watson, author of "We've aye been provided for, an' sae will we yet." He is the eldest of ten sons, and his early years were passed within sound of the thousand hammers that rattled in the shipbuilding yards on the banks of the Clyde, where his father was employed. Excepting two years spent in the north of England, where the family sought refuge at the time of the Western Bank failure, his life has been confined to the city of his birth. When about ten years of age he was sent out to earn his livelihood, and in 1871 entered the postal service, where he has since been employed in the sorting department. Mr Stark is of a contemplative bent of mind, with an occasional pawky turn of humour that is seen to great advantage in some of his characteristic delineations of Scottish life. His most effective poems are written in his native Doric, and show felicity of expression and genuine poetical abilities. Many of his stanzas on the subject of "life's

young dream," wedded bliss, and a happy fireside, are truly word-pictures, full of grace, tenderness, and nobility of sentiment. Several of his pieces have appeared in the *Glasgow Herald* and other Scotch newspapers, under the *nom-de-plume* "Willie S.," where, from the readiness with which they found a corner, we may conclude they were deservedly appreciated by the general reader.

LIFE'S WEB.

Oh, heart of mine that wildly beats
  Within my breast like bird in cage:
Oh! thoughts that surge, Oh! thoughts that burn,
  Can nought your waywardness assauge?
Oh brain be still, Oh heart be calm,
  Your throbbings and unrest resolve:
Break down the anguish and the grief,
  The sorrow and the pain dissolve.

For every soul must know the warp,
  For every heart must take the woof,
And you, like all, must bear the cross
  That put the threads of life to proof,
That blends the mazy filaments
  Into a grand and spacious whole,
And from a thousand ends evolves
  A glorious and compacted roll.

And are, indeed, thy sorows more,
  More than the most of men around?
Know'st thou a working far above
  What other mortals e'er have found?
A thousand motions lifting up—
  A thousand movements dropping low,
Now in the midst of sombre shade,
  And now amidst the gleam and glow.

To some, in truth, on this fair earth,
  'Tis hard to see or comprehend
The good in sorrow, or to know
  Where toils and burdens rightly tend;
How complex labours, chequered paths
  That wear the spirit, try the strength
Are but the means to lead them on
  Unto a happier end at length.

Oh faithless soul be quiet and still
At times in life's mysterious loom
Embossèd figures rare are wrought
All through the sunshine and the gloom.
And wert thou, heart, not sore and frail,
And were ye, eyes, not dimmed in power,
Through warp and woof would swift be seen
The inwrought-work of leaf and flower.

Then crushed be every wrestling thought,
Then hushed be every foolish fear,
A nobler fate is coming fast,
A brighter end is drawing near.
Let not, O soul, thy courage droop,
Let not, O heart, thy love e'er flee,
The more complex life's web appears
The better will its pattern be.

THE LICHT IN THE WINNOCK.

The licht in the winnock, my ain cosy winnock,
The cheery bit lowe o't, the canty bricht flame,
There's naething sae dear as the licht in the winnock—
The licht in the winnock that welcomes me hame.

Before the clear dawin' had tappit the Ochils,
Ere yet the grey mists had gaen up ower the hill,
Wi' plaid roun' my shoothers, an' rung in my oxter,
I clamb the steep knowe at the back o' the mill;
An' turnin' hauf roon at the en' o' the plantin',
I saw, snugly theekit, my ain bonnie nest,
Whaur bairnies an' wifie within the bit winnock,
A wee whilie langer were takin' their rest.

Come in here, noo Rover, quo' I to my collie,
There's trampin' an' speelin' before the day's dune;
We'll need to be steerin', the mornin' is clearin',
Ben Ledi is airin' his aul' croon abune.
Fu' lang lies oor gate through the Pass o' Glenfinlas—
We've lochins to wade through, we've waters to cross,
An' mony a knowe maun be seen to the head o't
Through brackens an' heather, through rashes an' moss.

There's sheep to be coontit, there's lambs to be tentit,
An' wan'erin' wathers brocht back to the brae;
We'll need to be sayin' hoo a' things are daein'
When we toddle back at the closin' o' day.
Come on, then, blythe Rover, let's forrit be movin',
We're baith o' us sturdy and soun' as a bell,
An' gin we win hame till oor brose an' oor braxy,
Ye'se get the fat tail o't to crunch for yersel'!

An' sae pushin' onward wi' crook an' wi' collie,
I saw a' my care on the hillocks aroon',
Then syne as aul' Phœbus sank doon in the wastward,
My doggie an' I made oor way for the toon,
An' turnin' the plantin' that croons the sweet valley
Wi' sair wearit body an' hungersome wame,
I saw clearly beamin', I saw brichtly gleamin',
The licht in the winnock that welcomed me hame.

An' doon the dear dell, as I stapt oot fu' briskly,
My heart a' a-lowin' to see the dear licht,
My fancy already within my ain dwallin'
Was picturin' oot ilka fondly-loved sicht—
My wife at the ingle, owerlookin' the supper,
My bairns roon' the table, the dishes a' spread,
The wean in the cradle, my chair in the corner,
A shinin' fire-en', an' a warm cosy bed.

The quiet look o' welcome frae wife o' my bosom,
The clatter o' spunes, an' the steamin' o' kail,
The barkin' o' Rover, the wean's wauk'nin' prattle,
As I entered the door an' sat doon to the meal ;
Sic speakin' an' knockin', sic suppin' an' chokin',
Sic bobbin' o' heads an' sic kickin' o' spars,
Ye'd think that their daddie had been at the fechtin',
An' just newly hame again fresh frae the wars.

I saw it a' clearly what lo'ed I sae dearly,
An, coontin' ilk wee roguish head that was there,
Quo' I to mysel', Losh, we ocht to be thankfu',
We're hearty an' healthy, although we be puir.
We've aye what we're needin', we've kitchen an' cleedin' ;
What want we wi' fortune, what need we o' fame?
For love lichts the lamp in oor bonnie wee biggin',
An' trims the leal lowe o't that welcomes me hame.

The licht in the winnock, my ain cosy winnock,
The cheery bit lowe o't, the canty bricht flame ;
There's naething sae dear as the licht in the winnock,
The licht in the winnock that welcomes me hame.

PLAYIN' WI' THE KITTLENS, AN' HAUDIN' WI' THE CAT.

The diel has surely broken lowse—
That sic a thing I e'er should say !
An' turned this warl' sae upside doon,
A body kens na what to dae ;
Sic dealin's frae my fellow-man
In a' my life I never gat—
Folk playin' wi' the kittlens
When they're haudin' wi' the cat.

There's Jeannie, noo, as fine a lass
As ever linkit ower the lea;
Some tantrum notion in her head
Has lately made her lichtlie me;
Her heart is true, I mak' nae doot,
But still she ocht to min' what's what—
She's playin' wi' the kittlens
While she's haudin' wi' the cat.

A neebor gossip frae the muir
Cam' doon the loan yestreen to tell
Hoo Jeannie had gaen up the glen
A-courtin' wi' wee Willie Bell;
Thinks I, gude woman, ye're no' bad
At chalkin' ower a greasy pat—
Ye're playin' wi' the kittlens,
But ye're haudin' wi' the cat.

I raither fear, did I but ken't,
There's something geyan deep behin'—
Her daddie an' her minnie think
To woo ower lang an unco sin.
They needna gang sae roon-the-bus
To tell me what they're drivin' at—
Sic playin' wi' the kittlens,
An' sic haudin' wi' the cat.

I frankly own they hae a richt
To put a lover to the proof,
But gudeness me! can honest folk
No' tell their story clean aff loof?
If they're no plain, I'll need to be't,
An' say fair doon I'm thinkin' that
They're playin' wi' the kittlens,
Gin they're haudin' wi' the cat.

Oh that puir mortals had the sense
To lay sic silly tricks aside;
To be an' act the thing that's richt,
An' aye by candour to abide;
To speak straichtforrit what they mean,
In heat or cauld, in dry or wat—
An' no' to heed the kittlens,
When they're haudin' wi' the cat.

JENNY O' THE NESS.

Oh! a' ye swains upon the hill
That poets ca' Parnassus,
Wha spen' their time in rantin' rhyme
In praise o' witchin' lasses;

Ye think, nae doot, that heaven's aboot
As ye yer loves confess;
But I've a nobler, wordier theme
In Janet o' the Ness.
Aul' Jenny o' the Ness,
Hale an' ruddy, canty body,
Jenny o' the Ness.

Before the sun is i' the lift
Upon the green she's steerin',
An' on her croon bobs up an' doon
The snawy mutch she's wearin':
There, in a raw, sae clean an' braw,
She spreads upon the gress
Her weel-hained store o' bleachin' claes,
Brisk Janet o' the Ness.
Aul' Jenny o' the Ness,
Eident, rubbin', busy scrubbin',
Jenny o' the Ness.

I see her in the wee bit shop
When weans frae schule are skailin',
An' halesome kail, wi' ready sale,
To hungry wames she's dealin'.
Whiles bannock dauds a wee haun' hauds,
An' whiles, as ye may guess,
The bawbee gangs for sweetie wares
To Janet o' the Ness.
Aul' Jenny o' the Ness,
Cookin', firin', never-tirin'
Jenny o' the Ness.

The aul' grey parrot in his cage,
The kist, the low-set presses;
The bowls, the spunes, the shinin' tins,
The jugs an' glitt'rin' glesses;
The Holy Beuk within the neuk,
And mair I could express—
In fancy's view I see them a',
Wi' Janet o' the Ness—
Aul' Jenny o' the Ness,
Bien an' canny, thrifty granny—
Jenny o' the Ness.

THERE'S LASSIES THREE IN YON TOON.

There's lassies three in yon toon,
That taps the firry knowe;
But whilk to lo'e, but whilk to woo,
Has clean perplexed my pow.

For Maggie's modest, meek, an' fair,
An' Katie's brisk an' braw,
But Graham for wise an' winsome air,
Richt fairly dings them a'.

There's lassies three in yon toon,
Sae cosy on the brae,
But wha to kiss, an' wha to miss,
Is past my po'er to say;
For Maggie dirls at my heart,
An' Katie tak's my e'e,
But Graham has aye the deeper part
That claims the thocht frae me.

There's lassies three in yon toon
That sits upon the hill;
But whilk to dawt, an' whilk to faut,
Fu' sairly tries my will;
For Maggie's sweet, for Maggie's fine,
An' Kate has een sae blue,
But Graham has got the grace o' min',
Sae firm, sae leal, an' true.

There's lassies three in yon toon,
Sae trig upon the heicht,
An' wha's my lass, an' wha to pass,
Is puzzlin' me ootricht—
For Maggie is sae mild an' shy,
An' Kate's sae blythe an' free;
But Graham for solid sense can vie—
An' wha's the maid for me?

CHARLES PHILIP GIBSON.

"CHEERFULNESS: A POEM," was the title of a work issued by Messrs Edmonstone & Douglas, Edinburgh, in 1875. No name was given on the title page, which only bore the following motto from Addison—"I have always preferred Cheerfulness to Mirth; Mirth is short and transient—Cheerfulness fixed and permanent." The poem is in the heroic couplet, and was well received in notices from various

influential sections of the press, recalling, as it does, something of Goldsmith, something of Thomson, with here and there suggestions of Cowper, in the topics and subjects dealt with, and its manner of treating them. Especially is this manifest in the descriptions of country scenes and seasons, with depictions of character manifestly taken from life, and the cheerful aspects in which these are set; the whole being suffused with a fine warmth of colouring as well as depth of penetrating culture indicative of a real poetic vein.

In course of time the book appeared in advertising lists as from the pen of Charles P. Gibson. The Mr Gibson thus indicated was born in Leith in 1818, his father being a merchant of some standing in that town, who had come originally from Northumbrian regions. Charles spent a considerable portion of his boyhood with relatives near Wooler. He began his school education in a private boarding house there, and afterwards for a further period in a boarding school at Peebles. He then served articles in the office of a W.S. in Edinburgh, attending classes also in the University with the view of qualifying for the Scottish Bar. His health having failed he again betook himself to the country, and having acquired some experience of farming, he took a lease of a farm in the east of Berwickshire, in the Parish of Foulden—one of the most beautiful districts of the Merse—and settled there for about sixteen years. At the end of that period he removed to Edinburgh, and received the appointment of Secretary and Treasurer for Dr Guthrie's Original Ragged Schools, the Patriotic Fund, and some other benevolent institutions. His management of these helped to recommend him to the Directors of "The Scottish Widows' Fund" Insurance Company, who appointed him to the office of resident manager of their agency in Dundee, from which, after a few years experience, he was transferred to the still

more important agency of the same company in Leeds, Yorkshire, which office he still worthily holds.

We are not aware of Mr Gibson having published any smaller pieces than the poem under consideration, which makes our difficulty of selecting a specimen or two the greater, as such are apt to lose by separation from the context.

PRESENCE OF CHEERFULNESS IN NATURE.

. . . . . I see the morn arise,
Paint first with rosy light the eastern skies,
Then flood th' horizon round with countless varied dyes :—
Ascends the Sun beyond the eastern hills,
And the glad Earth with song and beauty fills
Fresh glist'ning with the dews the night distils.
Now soars the lark to greet the new-born light,
Up the blue "lift" quick darts her flick'ring flight,
Higher and higher yet, till lost to sight :—
Pois'd high in air, she spreads her quiv'ring wings,
With gladsome heart her thrilling rapture sings,
And as her limpid melody she pours,
The music to the earth falls in ethereal show'rs.
The bee, awak'd, glad hails the dawning hour,
And flies with droning hum from flow'r to flow'r,
The flow'rs breathe incense on the moisten'd air,
Which climbs to heav'n like acceptable pray'r ;
Unseen the dove, whose plaintive notes arise,
Sob thro' the woods, and thrill the ear like sighs.
Far up the sky the crows assembling meet,
And, with loud clam'rous croak, each other greet,
Making confused melody.—Anon
One as an herald cleaves his path alone
Through the bright sky, and as he soars along
Croons to himself his solitary song.
Flashes the thrush from out her leafy nest
With twittering sound, then quick, with throbbing breast,
Back to her chirping young herself she flings,
And warmly wraps them with her loving wings.
Proud chanticleer, elate, distends his throat,
Loud claps his wings, and crows defiant note ;
The turkey-cock stands scolding in the path,
With gusts of loud, unreasonable wrath ;
The pompous geese, while strutting o'er the ground
In clumsy pride, emit their trump-like sound,
Not unmelodious.— Now ducks are seen
Waddling ungraceful o'er the dewy green
To the old village pond, there plunge away,
And, with short quack, glad swim the livelong day.

The sheep, from out the fold at morn set free,
With cheerful bleatings, whiten all the lea;
The ox, new-wak'd, slow-rising, twists his tail,
Then crops the flow'ry grass adown the dewy vale;
The horse, from labour free, erects his mane,
Tosses his head, and gallops o'er the plain,
Delirious with his joy—then stops, and then again,
Swift as the wind, starts off as if in strife,
Impelled by inward joy, the luxury of life.
These denizens of air, of hill and plain,
All joy, O Cheerfulness, beneath thy reign,
Bask in the sunny light thou lov'st to yield,
Glad, as though Sin's dread doom had been repeal'd.
Jocund the sylvan scene, when thro' the trees
Of varied foliage, gently sings the breeze
Of early morn, while with sweet tiny noise
Countless glad insects hum their new-born joys,
Thrilling the air with song—and as we rove,
Rapt with the mingling music of the grove,
The eye is raptur'd too, for on our sight,
Blend sober shadows and the dancing light.
Cold is that heart and dead that not essays
Grateful to join the universal praise
That swells around, and as a psalm ascends
Up to the throne of God, who living bends
To bless his sentient creatures great and small,
Rejoicing in the joy of each and all,
Who ceaseless manifests His loving care
Of all that lives in earth, or sea, or air,
Sees none so great as not to need His aid,
Has none so small or mean as to evade
His sleepless love, since all owe Him their trust,
Seraphs in heav'n and worms amid the dust.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF NATURE.

Far round Old Woodburn beauteous scenes appear,
Some shining far away, some smiling near;
Like to a sea of glass see ocean rest,
Bright with heaven's tints clear mirror'd in its breast,
While o'er its broad expanse, far-gleaming bright,
Flash the white sails like sea-birds in their flight,
Through the calm deep the steamer panting plies,
While far behind the dusky banner flies.
O'er the blue waters dim in misty gray,
In placid beauty sleeps the Isle of May,
While, still beyond, Fife lies in shadowy gleams,
Glimmering as in the mystic light of dreams,
Or that in which, 'neath faith's keen eyes expand
The bright'ning glories of the better land.

Amid these scenes whose magic beauties rise
To bless the sight, Old Woodburn peaceful lies;
There no harsh tones the list'ning ear invade,
None, save the leasing sounds by Nature made.
In distant onstead, faintly heard afar,
Rings the cock's crow that sounds the note of war,
Anon 'tis echoed with defiant pride
By all the cocks in all the country side.
The waggon creaking 'neath its cumbrous load,
The gig's light wheels swift whirling o'er the road,
The click of hoofs that beat the echoing ground,
Till in the distance softly dies the sound;
The lusty team that vig'rous shake their chains,
As they're driv'n onwards by the bawling swains,
While faint is heard the harrows' tinkling sound,
As they swim wriggling thro' the fallow ground;
The whirring muffled boom from distant mill,
The wind soft sighing from the neighb'ring hill,
The low of cattle borne upon the breeze,
The sweetly prattling brook, the whisp'ring trees,
The peasants' song, as glad they homeward go,
The waves' faint murm'ring on the beach below—
All, all, sweet blending, music's charms combine,
And while they soothe the ear the heart refine.

A PATRIARCH.

Where Foulden's waving woods enchant the sight,
And with soft, soothing sound the heart delight,
Where blush the heather-bells in purpling dye,
And golden furze gleams lustrous on the eye,
Where her bright yellow tresses waves the broom,
And rasps and brambles shine in silv'ry bloom,
The songsters of the grove, on flick'ring wing,
Through the glad day their limpid music sing,
While winds soft sigh as through the woods they creep,
Like happy childhood murm'ring in its sleep.—
Deep in this sylvan scene, half-hid from view,
Adorn'd with fragrant shrubs of ev'ry hue,
In former days there stood a woodman's cot
(Mem'ry broods o'er it as a sacred spot),
Where, far remote from din and worldly strife,
Dear old James Johnston led his godly life.
A man of worth, of firm but humble mind,
And though a peasant, yet of soul refined,
By errors nor beguiling nor beguiled,
Shrewd with plain sense, yet simple as a child,
His mind was bless'd with clear and useful light,
The bliss of those whose heart and life are right.
Of worldly ways and wiles he little knew,
But (better taught) he felt his Bible true,

With fervent gaze perus'd its sacred page,
His guide and solace both in youth and age,
Imbib'd the sacred lore its words impart,
Light to the mind, and comfort to the heart,
And felt the double bliss those words supply,
Teaching us how to live and how to die.

Vivid I see the old man rise to view,
Hearty, and hale, erect, and ninety-two;
His ruddy cheeks, his broad, clear, sunny brow,
His sparkling eyes, which kindly glances throw,
His merry laugh, his cheerful loving smile,
His kindly tones which ev'ry heart beguile,
All, all bright gleam from out the distant past,
Seem on us still a look of love to cast,
While his kind words e'en yet can peace impart,
And bless us with the Sabbath of the heart.

One day I spied him in the sylvan wild,
Beside his cot round which his garden smil'd,—
The summer wind scarce breath'd among the trees,
The air all trem'lous with the hum of bees,
While many-tinted flow'rs bloom'd glowing fair,
Whose mingled fragrance scented all the air;
There, as I pass'd his Eden-like retreat,
I saw him sitting on his rural seat,
Rapt in deep, holy muse—smiling serene—
Glow'd with Heaven's peace his venerable mien;
And as the past rose lustrous on his gaze,
To Heaven he raised his eyes in silent praise—
His face the while with light celestial shone,
He felt His presence, felt but it alone.

Within his calm and heaven-instructed soul,
Sufficing joy and hope held joint control—
The former made him glad on earth to stay,
To Heaven the latter beckon'd him away:
Assail'd by both in turn, their friendly strife
But bless'd his soul, illum'd the close of life:
Happy with both, by joy of either bless'd,
Content to go or stay as God saw best:
His soul, illum'd and warm'd with light and love,
Felt here the bliss the ransomed feel above,
For in his Beulah-home to him 'twas given
That smile which gives its blessedness to Heaven.

DANIEL KING

WAS born in Glasgow in 1844, and four years later he was deprived, on the same day, of both his parents by cholera. The family of four were soon afterwards scattered among aunts, who, unfortunately for the children, had enough to do with themselves. The subject of our sketch, at the age of nine, having heard his relative say that he was a burden in her family, discovered that he was truly an orphan. He was provided with a little money, and took the boat for the Island of Arran, where he was successful in getting a situation as a herd boy. He remained six months on the Island, and then removed to West Kilbride, Ayrshire, where he was employed for a year or two at farm work, enduring many hardships and privations. Although his education was of the scantiest nature, and the little he got was acquired as he grew up, he felt a desire to learn a trade. He therefore went to Govan, and was successful in getting a situation in a shipbuilding yard, working as labourer for some time, until, by steady and diligent application, he gained the favour of the foreman of the iron department, and was taken as an apprentice to that class of work. He served his time faithfully, and was afterwards five years in the employment of Messrs John Elder & Co., from which he removed to Port-Glasgow, where he received an appointment as foreman rivetter in the yard of a large firm of shipbuilders and engineers, which situation he has filled for the past fourteen years.

During his leisure moments Mr King has cultivated his mind, and has given evidence of his literary tastes and poetical powers by his numerous contributions to the *Glasgow Herald* and other newspapers and periodicals. His thoughts are fraught with an elevated

sentiment, and possess a manly and honest ring. He has also a vein of quiet, yet telling humour, which he can use with good effect, while several of his reflective poems are tender and sympathetic.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

The wanderer langs to see the hame whaur aft he sang wi' glee,
The wee white hoose ayont the mill beside the rowan tree;
He langs to see the mither that he left sae sad and lane,
Nor dreams he for a moment that his langin' is in vain.

He lea's the city far behin' that lured him on to vice,
That stole the blossom frae his cheek an' made his heart like ice;
An' wi' a heart maist like to break wi' sense o' bitter shame,
Wi' weary steps he wanders back to yon wee cottage hame.

When comin' near the auld mill burn, that wimples to the sea,
He sees the yett whaur aft he swung in innocence an' glee;
The bairns are jumpin' fu' o' fun, without an ache or pain;
"Oh, what," he said, "wad I no gie to be a bairn again!"

He draws near to the hoose whaur first he saw the licht o' day,
The hoose whaur aft his gentle mither taught him hoo to pray;
He lifts the latch, he enters: but no face can recognise—
He's tell't his mither isna there, an' starts back in surprise.

The tears cam' tricklin' doon his cheeks, that looked a deidly hue,
For weel he kent that he had broke a heart baith leal an' true.
"Oh, tell me whaur she's gane?" he gasped, "oh, has she crossed
the 'ford;'"
He's tell't she has, an' lying yonder in the auld kirkyard.

He wanders back to the auld kirkyard wi' heart baith sad an'
sair,
He kneels doon on the sacred yerd, an' breathes a silent prayer:
An' he resolves, wi' solemn vow, to shun the path o' sin,
An' lead a better life until his journey here is dune.

WEE JAMIE.

When ither bairns were snug in bed,
An' free frae earthly care,
Beneath the arch wee Jamie stood,
Disposing o' his ware;
An' tho' he felt the cauld gaun through
His ill-clad shiv'rin frame,
He aye was keen to sell his stock
Before he made for hame.

In sleet, in rain, in frost, or snaw,
Wee Jamie ta'en his stan',
Beneath the gloomy railway arch,
Wi' "vestas" in his han',
An' wi' a feeble squeakin' voice,
We'd hear him faintly cry,
"Buy vestas, sir, buy vestas, sir,"
To ilka passer by.

To look on his wee pale wan face
Wad melt a heart o' stane;
Folk maun hae felt for him gin they
Had bairnies o' their ain.
I've aften felt my heart gey fu',
An' could hae grat my fill,
To see him shiv'rin' in the cauld,
An' him sae white an' ill.

I left the district for a while,
Whaur Jamie stood his lane,
A few weeks pass—on my return
I found that he had gane.
I ask'd a callan whaur he was,
That stood in Jamie's stead;
"Oh, sir," he said, "wee Jim's at hame,
An' lyin' ill in bed."

I socht the hame whaur Jamie liv'd—
Oh, what a sicht I saw—
The bairnie lying in a neuk,
Upon a pickle straw.
Beneath the arch the seed was sawn,
That laid him noo sae low,
The cauld east win' that blew sae keen,
Had struck the fatal blow.

TONGUE DISCIPLINE.

Yer fou', oh, Robin Duff, yer fou',
Ye haena got a fit to stan',
The smell that's comin' frae yer mou'
Wad sicken ony sober man;
An' yet ye'll tell me to my cheek
'Twas harmless a' the drink ye got;
Preserve us, Rab, ye canna speak,
Ye leein', dirty, drucken sot.

I wonner what on earth ye mean,
Wi' sic a bonnie carry-on;
If ye'd a wife like Bogston Jean,
She'd smash yer nose as flat's a scone.

Turn roon ! Dear me ! what claes wi' glaur !
Look at the picture o' yer coat !
Just lift yer han', man, if ye daur,
You cruel-hearted, drucken sot.

If ye was daein' what was richt,
Ye'd teach the bairns the fear o' God ;
Ye canna, Rab, when ilka nicht
Yer stotin' under sic a load.
Ye neither 'tend to wife nor bairn,
For, haith, yer seldom aff the trot,
A feed o' drink's a' your concern,
Ye heedless, dirty, drucken sot.

Ye tell me aft to shut my mooth,
For fear the neebors hear me flite,
I've aften hid frae them the truth,
But noo I dinna care a dite.
Ye've ta'en it oot o' me gey'n sair,
Wi' tipplin' at that cursed tot,
An' noo ye'll bully me for mair,
Ye greedy, dirty, drucken sot.

Mony a weary nicht I've sat,
Aft wi' a gnawin', empty wame ;
An' aften, aften, hae I grat
To think ye made sic licht o' hame.
Your weans are nearly starved to death,
But, Rab, ye dinna care a jot ;
Oh, haud awa' frae me yer breath,
Ye heartless, dirty, drucken sot.

I've heard ye rin the whisky doon,
An' say it could be done withoot ;
Ne'er say't again, ye drucken loon,
Ye'd sook it through a clorty cloot.
I wish I ne'er had seen your face,
Oh, could I only loose the knot
That's brocht me to sic black disgrace,
Ye laithsome, dirty, drucken sot.

OOR MAGGIE'S A STEERIN' WEE WEAN.

Oor Maggie's an auld-farran', steerin' wee wean,
She keeps the hoose just in'a fry,
Sin' e'er she's been able to toddle her lane
Baith but an' ben's like a pig-stye ;
She lo'es to be rowin' 'mang cinders an' coom,
We're glad whiles to lat her alane,
For, flyte as we like, she ne'er bathers her thoom',
Oor Maggie's a steerin' wee wean.

Gin ye clean the wee tot ilka 'oor o' the day,
Ere lang she's the colour o' taur,
Just lat her gang into the bunker to play,
She's as happy as a soo's 'mang glaur;
Her mither aft flytes at her wee tukie hen,
I'd rather she'd leave her alane,
To clap an auld heid on young shouthers, ye ken,
Wadna sit on oor steerin' wee wean.

Three winters ha'e croon'd her the en' o' last fa',
Though plenty on that ha'e their doots;
She's like an auld grannie o' seventy-twa,
Wi' a tongue that wad clip bits o' cloots.
Although she's steerin' I lo'e the wee doo,
Withoot her the hoose wad be lane;
I'd grieve to see ocht sittin' doon on her broo,
Although she's a steerin' wee wean.

WILLIAM GARDINER,

A POET of much merit, whose thoughts breathe true nobility of sentiment, as well as real felicity and charm of expression, was born at Upper Hallhills, Applegarth, Dumfriesshire, in 1804. When he was about five years old his father and mother, with their young family, removed to Burnfoot, Sibbaldbie, near Lockerbie, and in this happy home, in the green valley of Dryfe, which he loved so well, his boyhood's years were spent. He was educated at Sibbaldbie School, his teacher being a man far in advance of his time, with many whims and crotchets, yet whose memory William Gardiner delighted to honour when silver hair, "dawn of another life," was shading his own brow. The family at Burnfoot grew up with strong poetic tendencies, encouraged thereto by their mother's gentle well-stored mind, which was rich in the ballad lore of her native land. Of that much-loved mother he gives a pleasant picture in one of his songs—

"Ye mind me o'my schoolboy days,
My mother's happy glowing looks,
When, cunningly, her heart to please,
I pondered o'er these weary books.
Ye mind me o' her spinning wheel,
The birling heck, the bouzy rock;
While tumbling 'mongst the boiling kail
I watched the muckle cabbage stock."

Of his father, a true and beautiful description is given in the piece entitled "Grandfather's Grave." From his earliest years the boy was a poet, and though hardy and full of mischief, he had a mind bent on acquiring knowledge. Wherever his footsteps turned, something worth remembering came in his way, and to these perceptive and retentive qualities may be traced his rich store of traditionary legend, his knowledge of Roman camp and ancient British fort, and of architectural styles peculiar to different centuries. In his eyes the earth God made was fair, and the work He had pronounced "good" was good indeed.

"The mist upon the mountain tops,
The dew upon the heather bell,
O'erwhelm me with a flood of thoughts
Beyond the power of words to tell."

When he was a growing lad he was apprenticed to his uncle, John Bell, in Dumfries, to learn cabinetmaking. Here he became known to Jean Armour, widow of Robert Burns. We are informed that Mrs Burns had been in the workshop one day, and lifting up a well-read volume of Burns' poems, she said—"Aye, and does the laddie like Robin?" "He's fonder o' him than his work," replied his uncle. She smiled, and ever afterwards they were friends. He used to speak of a corner cupboard which his "'prentice hand" made for Mrs Burns, and which long years afterwards he saw had brought a goodly price as a relic of the great poet.

At the close of his apprenticeship Mr Gardiner returned to his native Dryfe, and about this time com-

posed several sweet songs. When he was in his twentieth year he went to Glasgow, and began the work of life—never sparing himself, and ever diligent, able, and conscientious. The inexperienced country lad soon became an experienced and accomplished tradesman—ever and anon singing sweetly in wistful numbers of the green glens and rocky linns of Dryfe. For many years he, with his brother Thomas, who was both talented and accomplished, carried on business as organ builders and pianoforte makers in Glasgow. At two different periods of his busy life, his work led him to spend some time at Appin in the West Highlands. Here several of his beautiful Highland songs were written. After his return to Glasgow he was acknowledged one of the "Bards of St Mungo," and his longest poem, "A Dream of the Moon," was published shortly after this. Mr Gardiner's keen sense of the ridiculous made him rather intolerant of the wholesale flattery bestowed on local bards, and as the characters in the poem were all "celebrated sons o' song," its publication caused much speculation at the time. Alexander Rodgers, William Millar, Alexander Park, John M'Kechnie, John Mitchell, A. Buchanan, the author himself, and many others, touched with a hand of gentle ridicule, were made to sing their own songs at a meeting of the Glasgow bards held in the moon! All through those busy years songs and other poems sprang from the poet's heart, and from time to time appeared in the magazines of the day. Mr Gardiner was a contributor to "Whistle Binkie," "Lays of St Mungo," and the "Nursery Songs." His knowledge of music being thorough and accurate, he was also the composer of several superior tunes.

In the year 1848 he returned with his family to his native Dryfe, where he spent the last thirty-seven years of his life, beloved and honoured. His Muse might be characterised as possessing in a remarkable degree keen depth of feeling and finished treatment.

His versification is ever correct, the language choice, and eminently chaste and thoughtful. The meaning is never obscure, the verses flow smoothly, and all breathe the sympathy of a pure, tender, and affectionate nature, and a placid trustfulness in God's guiding hand. It will thus be readily believed that sweet though his poetry is it was only one of the many adornments of his gifted mind. Often in his own workshop at Sibbaldbie the smell of the fragrant pine wood called up to his mind the joiner's shop in Galilee —Joseph at work among the cedar shavings, and our Lord as a boy and young man beside His reputed father at the bench. An extensive reader, he was mainly instrumental in establishing the Sibbaldbie Library, and at all times showed great interest in the welfare of the young, being for upwards of thirty years superintendent of the Sabbath School. Filling the time with deeds of well-doing and Christian kindness, working with gladness and singleness of heart, his "path was as that of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This account of a gifted and well-spent life may fitly close with a verse from the pen of his granddaughter, Mary Jane Murchie, selections from whose Muse we are also about to give—

"Hush'd now the tir'd heart, and set now is the sun;
'Tis winter time, the stars gleam out, the new life is begun;
Calm the sleep, and long and deep, but bright will the waking be,
The cross has been borne, the crown will be worn through all eternity."

THE WILD BEE.

Cannie wee body wha risest sae early,
And fa'st to thy work in the morning sae merrily,
Brushing thy boots on the fog at thy door,
And washing thy face in the cup o' a flower;
Welcoming blithely the sun in the east,
Then skimming awa' to the green mountain's breast;
Or crooning sae cantie thy sweet summer sang
While roaming the meadows the sunny day lang.

Thou mightest teach wit to the wisest of men,
Nature has gi'en thee sic gifts o' her ain ;
Thou needest nae almanac, bonnie wild bee,
For few hae sic skill o' the weather as thee.
Aye carefu' and cunning, right weel thou canst tell
If the sun's gaun to blink on the red heather bell,
And thou canst look out frae thy ain cozie door,
An' laugh at the butterfly drown'd in the shower.

Hast thou ony bairnies wha claim a' thy care,
That thou must e'en toil tho' thy banes may be sair ?
Do they hing round thy wee legs sae weary and lame,
A seeking for guid things when father comes hame ?
Nae doubt thou'lt be happy to see them sae fain,
For a kind father aye maun be proud o' his ain ;
And their mother will tell how they've wearied a' day,
And a' that has happened since thou gaed'st away.

When night darkens down o'er the hill and the glen,
How snugly thou sleep'st in thy warm foggy den ;
Nae master to please, and nae lesson to learn,
And no driven about like a puir body's bairn.
Oh ! happy would I be could I but like thee
Keep dancing a' day on the flowers o' the lea,
Sae lightsome and lively o' heart and o' wing,
And naething to do but sip honey and sing.

GRANDFATHER'S GRAVE.

There's aye a green spot where the weary may rest,
And some blinks of sunshine to soothe the distres't,
And sweet drops o' bliss will the desert supply,
Tho' in tears they should fa' frae mute sympathy's eye,
Sae amang a' my wanderings wherever I be,
There's aye a green spot o' attraction for me,
Whether breasting the tempest by mountain or wave,
My mind turns away to my grandfather's grave.

It is not when daisies bespangle the swaird,
And the white blossom'd haw fringes round the kirkyard,
Nor when Winter, stern giant, walks forth in his wrath,
And haps wi' a white sheet the cauld beds o' death,
The daisy may droop and the hawthorn be bare,
I lookna for flowers when my thoughts wander there,
The summer may sing or the winter may rave,
A' seasons are one in my grandfather's grave.

Oh ! weel do I mind him how stately and bauld,
And firm was his fitfa' altho' he was auld,
He could speak a rebuke wi' the fire o' his e'e,
And when he was angry he terrified me,

But soon a kind smile o'er his features would steal,
And if he was angry 'twas a' for our weal,
And to teach us sage lessons how we should behave
When he was ta'en frae us and laid in the grave.

He was muckle respected by rich and by poor,
And I've seen e'en the minister's gig at our door,
And proud, proud hae I been to jump and to rin
When he cried, "little boy, is your grandfather in?"
And oh, he could sing us sae canty a sang,
When on merry nights mixing the youngsters amang,
And tell siccan tales of the great and the brave,
Wha had fought in their day and were gone to the grave.

There's muckle in man's life o' sorrow and care,
And nae doubt but he had to fight wi' his share,
But the laird and the cottar in his days could gree,
And the warld was mair like what the warld should be,
For years of improvement bring hardships and strife,
And trouble and toil throw a gloom o'er this life,
But he kens na the cauld blasts that we hae to brave,
There's a Sabbath of rest in my grandfather's grave.

AULD MARY.

Auld Mary's away frae this cauld world o' care,
And we'll hear her bit tale 'mang the neighbours nae mair,
She has foughten the battle, and fa'n in the blast,
Now she lies in a bed where the weary may rest;
And there's nane in our green glen that ken'd the auld wife,
But will mind her for lang on the braes o' the Dryfe.

Oh, mony a burden has she borne alane,
Since she blew the first coal that warmed up the hearth-stan
And wi' mony a trial has Mary been tried,
Since she beuk the first bannock for Jamie, her pride;
It's lang since she first shed a mother's warm tears,
And she's worn the crape bonnet aboon twenty years.

The doctor, nae doubt, did whate'er he could do,
But for a' his prescriptions she couldna come thro':
They watched her by night, and they watched her by day,
While her e'e lost its light, and her strength wore away,
Till the wonderfu' change o'er her thin face did creep,
And Mary lay doon in a lang quiet sleep.

Now they'll nae committees round her ingle convene,
To discuss the concerns o' the country at e'en;
When bridals and births were despatched at command,
And affinity bills in the clap o' a hand.
If our great men that struggle and kick the State ba'
But kent wi' what ease we can settle the law,

They wad learn to get thro' wi' their business like men,
By the lessons they'd see at an auld wife's fire-en'.

Now the wee theekit house 'neath the auld elm tree
Maun soon be a' levell'd as low as the lea;
And the kailyard where spearmint and southerwood grew,
Will soon be dismantled and torn by the plew;
Her hame's in the kirkyard her bairnies amang,
Where we maun a' follow before it be lang.

Ye cozy wee shielings, and ye mauna stan';
There'll no be a monument left in the lan',
To show to our bairns where their forefathers grew,
And tell o' the leal hearts that aince glow'd in you;
Where the lint-rig was sawn for our mothers to spin,
When the youngsters at e'en in their glee gathered in.

When the laird o' the land could be happy at hame,
And read the "Ha' Bible," and think it nae shame;
'Twas a sight to be seen that was holy and gran',
When the rich show'd a pattern to lead the puir man;
There was mair honest kindness and far less o' pride,
When the auld spinning-wheel sang at every fire-side.

BONNIE LISMORE.

Away on the mountains, ye mists of the morn,
And arise thou fair day o'er the valleys of Lorn,
Come forth in thy brightness o'er head-land and tower,
And burst into beauty on bonnie Lismore.

Thou lark soaring high, the blythe sunbeams to hail,
And waken thy neighbours to sing down the vale,
Fly away with thy sweet song the dark waters o'er,
And sing to my Mary, the maid of Lismore.

Thou butterfly bright, in the young smiles of day,
Dancing light o'er the heath-bells, oh haste thee away,
There are flowers fairer far, by yon lone cottage door,
Where wanders my Mary, the maid of Lismore.

Then oh! what a concert around her shall ring,
The beauty, the mirth, and the music of spring,
Your happy wee hearts shall each other encore,
Cheer'd on by my Mary, the maid of Lismore.

Oh! say, thou soft breeze, does she wander like me,
To brush the bright dew from the flowers of the lea?
Do her fairy feet stray o'er the shells of the shore,
Where the rippling waves play round the maid of Lismore.

The rough rocks of Creeran frown gloomy and steep,
And Appin's dark shadows float far o'er the deep;
But rough rocks and wild woods mine eye wanders o'er,
And rests on the bosom of bonnie Lismore.

BONNIE DRYFE.

Bonnie Dryfe, my native stream,
I have loved thee lang and dearly,
Glancing in the sunny beam,
Glinting thro' the bracken clearly.

Wayward, wand'ring mountain bairn,
Dancing down the glen so grassy,
Leaping light by cliff and cairn,
Gleesome as a muirland lassie.

Singing by the Roman moat,
Neighbours ye've been lang together,
Sadd'ning memories vex thee not,
Lilting blythely thro' the heather.

Seaward wandering, bright and free,
Dreaming not of Old World story,
Fallen empire's nought to thee,
Older thou than Roman glory.

I have roamed by silver Tweed,
Stately Clyde, majestic rushing,
Strayed where Highland rivers speed,
O'er their rocky channels gushing.

None can sing a song like thine,
None can dance so light and airy,
None can cheer this heart o' mine
Like thee, thou merry mountain fairy.

ANNIE WALKER GARDINER,

AUTHORESS of numerous very sweet and tuneful poems and songs, is the youngest daughter of the subject of the foregoing sketch. She was born at Johnstone Bridge, Annandale. Surrounded by such home

influences as the details we have given of the career of Mr Gardiner will have revealed, and with parents whose beautiful character and well-stored minds made all around them happy, she had a joyous childhood. She was also highly privileged in being made the beloved and constant companion of their declining years. Miss Gardiner has written verses of a very high order for some of our most influential and popular magazines and periodicals, including "Chambers's Journal," &c. As we have mentioned this journal, we might here state that her father was also a contributor to "Chambers's." We are further informed by a friend, and should have mentioned the fact in connection with his sketch, that the verses we have given on "Bonnie Dryfe" was the last piece Mr Gardiner wrote, and for which the remuneration came from the publishers a few days after his death. The money was sent by his daughter to a friend in China whose husband is a missionary there. It reached *him* but not *her*, for *she* had gone to the Better Land about a week before her old friend whose poem had earned the gift.

Miss Gardiner's poetry is eminently chaste and thoughtful, full of light, and beautiful in expression. Its melody is also very marked. Every piece reads with the utmost smoothness, and there is ever present a sense of unity that speaks highly alike of the technical skill and the imaginative strength of the author.

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

She sits and listens to the song
Which peals the village church along,
And snow-white is her hair,
With folded hands upon her knee,
And smile, which might an angel's be,
So sweet it is and rare.

Her thoughts have flown far, far away—
She lives again life's opening day,
She hears the blackbirds sing;

Outside the cottage window low
The primroses and cowslips grow,
And whisper of the spring.

Again she takes her husband's hand,
And walks into an unknown land
Where hopes unnumbered rise;
Together, glad, they climb life's hill,
The summer sunshine round them them still
And o'er them smiling skies.

But one day death walked by their side,
And tho', with desperate hand, she tried
To turn away his dart,
She saw her loved one's eyes grow dim—
Knew that life's march was o'er for him,
That joy and she must part.

Her feet have walked a weary way
Since on that fatal summer's day
She wandered first alone;
The hill top long is past, and slow
She journeys to the vale below,
And night draws calmly on.

Sunbeams shine through the open door,
And linger on the old church floor—
They fall across a grave
Out there, beside the churchyard wall,
Where beach and rowan trees grow tall,
And autumn grasses wave.

They shine upon the ripening grain,
They touch with gold the old church vane,
High heavenward pointing bright,
They gleam athwart an old oak seat,
Where one sad heart has ceased to beat—
"At evening time 'tis light."

SPRING.

There is sunshine on the mountain's brow,
And sunshine on the sea,
There are blossoms on the hawthorn's bough
And leaves upon the tree;
While through the woods is ringing
A gay and glad refrain,
For birds are wildly singing
Sweet spring has come again.

The silvery clouds hold sunny showers,
While glancing drops of dew
Are sparkling on the woodland bowers
And wayside speedwells blue ;
And children troop together,
To twine the daisy's chain
In childhood's golden weather,
For spring has come again.

From nest hid 'mong the violets sweet
A little minstrel flies,
And singing, soars the sun to meet
High in the deep blue skies ;
Bright bird, to thee is given
A wondrous glorious strain,
To sing 'twixt earth and heaven
That spring has come again.

There is magic in the river's voice,
So grand, and deep, and strong,
It murmureth now, do good, rejoice,
The day is bright and long ;
Tho' singing halting never,
It journeys to the main,
And journeying, singeth ever
Sweet spring has come again.

Oh, spring is to the weary brain
What dew is to the grass,
And hope's fair flowerets bloom again
Where her light footsteps pass ;
For in the year's bright morning
The heart forgets its pain,
And earth's vain triumphs scorning
Grows young in spring again.

What tho' the silvery clouds may lower
And veil the orb of light,
What tho' there fall a sunny shower,
'Twill only make more bright ;
And soon the rainbow bending
Across the shining plain,
Will show that God is sending
His promise after rain.

SWEET HOPE, ABIDE.

Sweet hope, abide with us,
Fold thy bright wing,
Whate'er betide with us,
Close to us cling.

Deep in those hearts of ours,
Never to roam,
Through days of shine and showers
Make thy glad home.

Oft in life's morning fair,
Storms hover nigh,
Often at noon-tide care
Darkens the sky,
Life's fight would weary grow,
Soon without thee,
Without thy heavenly glow
What would *death* be?

When, through night's gates ajar
Fadeth the light,
When beams life's evening star,
Lonely and bright.
Hope at the close of day,
Steadfastly shine,
Send forth thy radiant ray
Glorious, divine.

YOUTH AND AGE.

I sang a song when life was young,
A song of glory, strength, and fame;
I dreamed a dream, spring leaves among,
That in worth's roll I'd carve a name;
The spring leaves darkened; life grew strong:
The rose's bloom said summer's here;
And clustering duties grew along
My path, and I began to fear
That fame was ill to find.

O glad and sweet the summer hours,
And blue the sky which with them came;
I met my dear wife 'mong the flowers
Of leafy June, nor cared that fame
Should pass me by, and onward press
Her glittering way—the loving light
In Lizzie's eyes, the golden tress
Of Lizzie's hair, were far more bright
Than aught on earth beside.

Then little children reverence gave—
A something grander far than fame;
And when we laid one in the grave,
We whispered low the Father's name.

Small was the hand which beckoning led
Our hearts far from earth's glittering wiles;
Pure was the soul which from us fled
To find a home where Jesus smiles,
And summer never ends.

Now winter comes with falling snow;
We gather round the bright home fire;
We feel no lack of fame's gay show,
For rest is all our heart's desire.
I clasp a dear, dear hand in mine;
My Lizzie's hair is silvered now;
Her eyes with love still constant shine,
Her children's blessings crown her brow,
And sweet content is ours.

SPRING-TIDE MEMORIES.

Far down the glen the primrose stars were shining,
All bright with morning dew,
Above our heads the clouds with silver lining,
Were drifting through the blue,
We watched thee in life's morning beauty sitting,
Among the blossoms fair,
While golden sunbeams were around thee flitting,
And falling on thy hair.

Spring smil'd and all the land was filled with glory,
And fragrance of sweet flowers,
No line of sadness in the wondrous story,
Of life's bright opening hours,
No withered leaves were to spring's garland clinging
No touch of fell decay,
No blight on hawthorn bowers where birds were sin
In that sweet month of May.

We wondered oft-times at the tender pity
Within thy loving eyes,
Nor dream'd it shone from the Celestial City,
Day-dawn of Paradise;
We knew not that the heavenly Master's token
Had made thy heart its home,
That thy recall had by the King been spoken,
And thou must needs be gone.

Once more adown that memory-haunted valley
Are blooming spring-tide's flowers,
But hushed is now that voice which musically
Rang through the vanished hours,
And now, ah now, we know thou wert but given
A season to our love,
Thy home eternal is with Christ in heaven,
Our treasure is above.

MARY W. SMITH.

RS SMITH is another member of the tuneful and talented family of Gardiner, being an er sister of the subject of our previous sketch. She born in Glasgow; but when she was about eight rs of age, the family removed to Annandale, where Gardiner inherited a little property from his father. was married in 1855, and went to Rothesay with husband, Mr James Smith, who was in business re. In 1862 they removed to Glasgow, where y still reside. Mrs Smith has contributed numer- poetical productions to religious and other gazines, in the pages of which they have been dially welcomed, and highly appreciated. Several ner very tuneful songs have been wedded to appro- ate melody, the latest of these being one of those give—"Sad Hearts, Glad Hearts," the music of ch is said to be in every respect worthy of the rds.

n her poetry we ever find present ease and asantness of metrical arrangement, combined with simple, unaffected expression of devout thought. seem to realise the glow and fragrance of well- ened fruit, and the rare delicacy and brilliance of exquisitely chosen vehicle of communication.

SAD HEARTS, GLAD HEARTS.

Sitting at my window,
Lo, a ship sails by—
Tall and stately mastheads
Pointing to the sky;
Dark and sullen waters
Swell on every hand,
Bearing sons and daughters
Far from fatherland,
Sad hearts, glad hearts,
How you go away,
Sailing, onward sailing,
In the opening day.

Sunny glints before you
Tell of brighter seas;
Ere the clouds close o'er you
Catch the outward breeze;
Vainly on the morrow
Look we for your track;
Worlds of joy or sorrow
Could not bring you back—
Sad hearts, glad hearts,
Whither do you stray?
Think you ye are sailing
Into night or day?

Some are hastening only
To a golden goal;
Others leave behind them
Heart, and life, and soul.
Oh, that one might whisper
Unto them that weep—
"Cheer you," brother, sister,
As you plough the deep.
Wherefore be down-hearted,
Night doth pass away,
Friends shall ne'er be parted
In the coming day.

Oh! that to the thoughtless
On life's sunny tide
One might whisper "Think you
Time shall aye abide?"
Where to cast your anchor
Have you sought and found,
Is your wished-for harbour
Safe and holy ground?
Sad hearts, glad hearts,
How we haste away,
Heaven's breezes waft us
To eternity.

On through shade and sunshine,
On through clouds and storm,
Ride above the tempest,
Bark of noble form,
Priceless treasures bearing
To the far-off shore;
Have them in Thy keeping,
Father, evermore.
Sad hearts, glad hearts,
How they sail away,
Have them in Thy keeping,
Father, night and day.

A FOREIGN LETTER.

From the green sunny haunts of our childhood
We have strayed with the rash foot of youth,
We have left the sweet dell in the wildwood,
But we still have the same hearts of truth—
The same hearts of truest affection,
That once could each other enthrall,
And banish far hence all dejection—
Do you so remember us all?

Though some you once loved as a brother,
Whose names were as household words, dear,
Have left this fair land for another,
And o'er them we still drop the tear,
Yet memory those sweet hours will cherish,
And days that she cannot recall,
And we will not let one loved name perish—
O, say you'll remember them all.

Our God gives us many a token
That the star of His favour's not set,
Though the cousinly band has been broken
There are many to welcome you yet.
Our grandsire is still here to bless us,
And the number around him's not small;
Our parents they live to caress us—
Come you, and be blessed by them all.

'Tis true there are nothing but changes,
Except the old mountains and rills,
For time in his frolicsome ranges
Has e'en found the "cleugh 'mong the hills,"
For Johnnie is wedded and over
The seas, like the folks "o' the Gall,"
And Jeannie has got a new lover,
Who'll steal her away from us all.

And the cousin that grandmother carried
And fell wi'—I'll no' breathe her name—
When ye come back, dear John, she'll be married,
And I will perhaps be the same.
And what of our sweethearts? dear Johnnie,
They are not more strapping nor tall
Than some, but they're "baith guid an' bonnie,"
Come you and be loved by us all.

O, had I the wings of a linnet,
And the notes o' the mavis sae clear,
I'd flee o'er the seas in a minute
And warble this song in your ear.

By all that is holy above us,
When low at the footstool you fall,
O tell us that still you can love us,
And aye will remember us all.

LETTERS ON THE CANDLE.

While sitting by the old home-hearth,
I watch the candle burn,
And read its signs of grief or mirth,
Forgotten frets return.

I liked the good old candle times—
Say, would you wish to know
The reason why I held them dear,
A long time ago?

We had a treasured absent one,
And when his letters came
'Twas joy to mother, daughter, son,
I need not give *his* name.

So when we saw our candle light
Leave one bright spark so low,
It seemed a letter clean and white,
A long time ago.

We watched upon whose side it hung,
With steady anxious look,
O! it's for mother, breathed each tongue,
While one the candle shook.

And joyfully we saw it fall
Just where it should, to show
The morrow would bring joy to all,
A long time ago.

These days are past, the loved one's here,
We feel his kind embrace,
His absence brings no more the tear
Adown the youthful face.

Yet smile not that this fancy wild
With deeper root may grow
Into the heart, than when a child,
A long time ago.

For O the heart's a twining thing,
And still the absent find,

Æolian like, it hath a string
For every gentle wind.

And gentle breaths have swept the chords
Of *one* that warbles low,
Unto the music of kind words,
As it did long ago.

LETTERS.

They come to my heart like a swelling stream
To the dry and thirsty sand,
They come like the music in midnight dream
From a bright and a holy band.

They come like the swallow's first glad chirl,
Like the twitter of its wing,
For precious to me as the deep sea's pearl
Are the welcome words they bring.

For they tell that friends still live and love,
And earth is no desert drear,
And they raise the downcast soul above
Each dark desponding fear.

Oh, sympathy is a living spring
When other founts are dry,
Where drooping hope may dip her wing
And, lark-like, seek the sky.

MARY J. MURCHIE

IS the last of our interesting and much esteemed family group of true poetesses, who have cultivated their natural gift so carefully that scarcely a misproportioned thought or halting line obtrudes itself to mar the beauty of the stanzas. Her mother is the eldest daughter of the late Mr William Gardiner, sketched on page 248. She was born at Sibbaldbie, near Lockerbie, in 1860. Her father, who died when she was nine months old, was a classical master in

Glasgow. After the death of her father, her mother removed to Lockerbie so as to be near her own parents. There the subject of our sketch served her term as a pupil teacher. Miss Murchie was a student in the Glasgow E.C. Training College during the years 1879-80, and from January 1881, until October 1885, she was mistress of the Infant Department of Glasgow Street Public School, Maxwelltown, Dumfries. She then became mistress of Dryfesdale Public School, Lockerbie, where she had previously served her apprenticeship. Like her talented relatives, Miss Murchie has contributed verses of much merit to several of our best known magazines. Many of her songs have been set to music by talented composers, including Leon Donati, C. R. Tennant, &c., and have already become popular. Her productions are such as cannot fail to be prized by all who appreciate and value true poetry. They possess a freshness and sweetness that lifts them well above the level of average modern verse. Her brief little poems and songs afford evidence of much depth of feeling, and a keen power of expression, as well as finished treatment. The language is ever choice, and the versification invariably correct. Indeed, Miss Murchie's utterances are altogether a genuine and welcome addition to our poetical literature.

BY YON BURNSIDE.

Oh, the sweetest flowers o' spring grow by yon burnside,
Fu' blythe the birdies sing doun by yon burnside!
An' happy memories
O' childhood's careless days
Roun' every neuk o't cling doun by yon burnside.

Could I herd ance mair the kye doun by yon burnside,
Aneath the summer sky, doun by yon burnside,
Or pu' again the flowers,
An' dream away the hours,
Nor ken that youth can die e'en by yon burnside.

But the wark o' life's begun far frae yon burnside,
An' mony a year has flown, since, by yon burnside,
We gathered nits and slaes
An' spieled the bonny braes,
Nor dreamt o' separate ways far frae yon burnside.

OH, TIME DELAY.

Happiness, gladness,
Sorrow, and sadness,
Time steals away,
Youth with its hopes so bright,
Youth with its heart so light,
Joyous, and gay.

Friends that are nearest,
Friends that are dearest,
Time steals away;
Takes now the leal and true,
Takes now the loving few,
Will not delay.

. . . .

Stay! oh, Time, stay with us,
Rest with us here,
Haste not away with all,
All we hold dear—
Youth and hope, love and friends!
Oh, Time, delay!
Here with us rest awhile,
Here with us stay!

OH, REST IN THE LORD!

"Rest and wait!" must life for me
Hold nothing of grand or great?
Tho' cruel the wind and the waves may be,
'Twere better to launch on the foaming sea,
Than stand on the shore and wait!"
With unshed tears her eyes are dim,
She cannot join the evening hymn—
"Oh rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him—rest, wait!"

Dreary and dark is the night,
The billows are raging high,
Despairingly drifting, (the Lord of Might
Has hidden His face) she can see no light,
Nor succour nor help is nigh;
But high above the waters' roll
A voice speaks to her storm-tossed soul—
"Oh rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him—rest, wait!"

"Peace, oh peace," our God knows best,
He whispers and all is still,
The lingering sun in the golden west
Speaks sweetly of evening and quiet rest,
She rests on her Father's will.
Tho' voice be faint and eyes be dim,
Grateful she joins the evening hymn—
"Oh rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him—rest, wait!"

ACROSS THE SEA.

The sun sinks low in the west, dear,
Far over the golden sea,
The birds fly home to their nest, dear,
And my thoughts fly home to thee—

Fly home with unspeakable love, dear,
Fly home with unspoken prayers,
With hopes that lift me above, dear,
And beyond all earthly cares.

. . . . .

With wealth of love and of faith, dear,
We never can parted be,
Nought can divide us but death, dear,
For our love can bridge the sea.

THE SONG OF THE HEART.

Blythely sings the young heart, and cheerily shines the sun,
'Tis spring o' the year, 'tis early morn, and life is but begun,
The day is bright, the heart is light,
And all the future years
Stretch forth as fair, with never a care,
Nor clouds, nor tears.

Boldly sings the young heart, but scorchingly shines the sun;
'Tis summer now, 'tis mid-day heat, the work of life is begun,
But hope runs high, while the steadfast eye
Fixed on the goal of fame,
Heeds not the glare, for he who will dare
Must win a name.

Cheerily sings the old heart, while slowly sets the sun,
'Tis autumn chill, 'tis eventide, and rest is now begun;
Brave was the heart that did its part,
And ever upheld the right;
Now sets the sun, the work is done,
Now comes the night.

Hushed now is the tired heart, and set now is the sun,
'Tis winter-time, the stars gleam out, the new life is begun,
Calm is the sleep and long and deep,
But bright will the waking be;
The cross has been borne, the crown will be worn
Through all eternity.

H. B. MACKENZIE.

HANNAH BROWN MACKENZIE is a lineal and worthy descendant of the Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, whose Biblical knowledge and writings have made his name almost a household word in Scotland. Miss Mackenzie was born at Hamilton, but was brought up amongst the wild grandeur of the Western Highlands, in Ross-shire, at the pretty little village of Loch-Carron, where her father holds the dual offices of postmaster and inspector of poor. Of an ardent and somewhat romantic temperament, she early gave evidence of a poetical vein, that found an outlet in poetry and romance. Indeed, from eight years of age upwards, composition became almost a passion with her, and subsequently she has been an energetic and prolific contributor to many Scottish newspapers and periodicals. When about nine years of age her family went to America, but after a time returned to Ross-shire, where she was partly educated, and where she remained till 1883. Since then she has resided in Glasgow. At first she found, as all literary aspirants do, considerable difficulty in making progress in the field of letters, but eventually obtained employment as a reviewer for the *Glasgow Herald*, and from that time has been able to hold her own with older veterans in the battle of life.

Miss H. B. Mackenzie is the authoress of "His Atonement," a serial tale that appeared in the *People's*

Friend; "Shanet's Aliset," which was published in the *Highland Magazine*, and two or three tales for the young, printed in book form. She has also been a contributor of short tales and sketches to the *People's Journal*, *Scottish Reformer*, *Scottish Nights*, and other papers. As a prose writer, Miss Mackenzie evinces skill and originality, and she is capable of sustaining the interest of the reader by drawing her characters from life, and endowing them with a glamour of description, natural as it is poetical. As a poet, she is eminently reflective, and frequently pensive, her utterances breathing the sympathy of a tender and affectionate nature. Philosophy and fancy seem to go hand in hand with felicitous charms of expression and true poetic inspiration. Her thoughts reveal the poet's eye and the artist's taste, and as such many of them will live.

MEMENTOES.

Only a ringlet of gold,
  Glossy, and fine, and fair;
A precious relic of days of old,
  Treasured with loving care.

Only a dainty glove
  That a tiny hand once wore;
Picked up, half in jest, and half for love,
  Long ago, from a ball-room floor!

Only a rosebud white,
  Scentless, and withered, and dead!
But it lay, one hour on a summer night,
  'Mid the bands of a golden head.

Only some letters old,
  Tied with a ribbon of blue;
But an old, old tale of love they told,
  And a heart beating strong and true!

Only a memory sweet
  Of a summer long years gone by!
Of the old stone wall where we used to meet,
  Beneath a darkening sky!

Only a sorrowful heart,
  Loveless, and dark with woe!

With a bitter pain, that will ne'er depart,
For hope vanished long ago!

Only a grass-grown mound,
And a small white cross at its head!
Where my faded rose sleeps in the cold, cold ground,
Beyond hope, or woe, or dread!

STAINLESS.

O tried and true!
Old friend, in whom my soul was wont to trust;
Old friend, though other friendships lie in dust
And crumble 'neath the passing foot above;
Old friend, outliving hopes, and dreams, and love,
Once more I stand by you.

O faithful heart!
None clung so closely in the day of youth,
When life looked bright, and false fair things seemed truth;
For youthful love is light, but thine was strong;
All other love died soon, but thine lived long:
We thought not then to part.

And in the hour
When tempests came, and rough and fiercely swept
Across my life, thy friendship never slept;
But through the waters of a bitter woe
It held my hand, and would not let me go:
It softened sorrow's power.

And when the strength
Of grief and anguish overcame my soul,
And 'neath the whirlwind and the tempests roll
I cowered, shrinking, still that steady hand
Guided my sinking steps to firmer land,
And there I stood at length.

Was that not love?
Was that not noble friendship, true and tried?
A noble soul that would have gladly died
To save my stumbling feet from further woe,
Higher than what we men call love below,
And liker heaven's above.

And so we meet,
After long years of parting, once again,
And all the passion and the anguished pain
Of that long past comes back with thy dear face;
But sorrow in my soul has long given place
To resignation sweet.

I know thee true
And sweet and tender as thou wert of old,
Though slanderous tongues have smirched thy name, and told
Dark tales that ever evil hearts love well
To revel in—tales black and false as hell!
Thy truth I ever knew.

Let all be said
That malice can invent, thy soul is pure
As you fair heavens, and, long as they endure,
Earth shall bear witness, never 'neath God's sky
Beat nobler heart, nor shall thy mem'ry die
When thou art with the dead.

LOOKING FORWARD.

Last year we sat together, love, on fair Ben Osgar's height,
On such a solemn eve as this, 'twixt day and coming night;
Far off into the western sea the sun was dipping low,
And all around the hills were dyed with a bright and ruddy glow.

No song of busy life came up upon the evening's breath,
'Twas all as if grim Death held reign in the grassy vale beneath;
Silent the solemn mountains, silent the placid sea!
O, love! how fair the world looked that pleasant night to me!

But the night came fast and faster upon the dying day,
And the crimson streaks of sunset slowly saddened into grey;
And the placid sea was calmer, and still the night was fair;
O, love! how fair and sweet it seemed to me when you were there!

For then you gently took my hands, and held them close in yours;
O, that long look shall haunt my heart as long as life endures;
For gentle were the words you said, and still you gazed at me;
"I ask no vow, for while life lasts, faithful your heart will be."

One short, short year! and, oh, that night! it seems so far away!
It never shall be farther in the long eternal day;
For there they count not by the years, when time and sense are o'er;
It is one long, long present, the past we know no more.

I wonder shall I think of it in that eternal home?
Of these long days we passed in dreams of glorious times to come?
Of all our visions of a life of fullest earthly bliss?
Of that sweet time when Heaven itself seemed bounded in one kiss?

I wonder will the seraphim, whose name itself is love,
Fold their bright wings across their face, in the glorious home above;
And turn with loathing from my touch, if I should talk of thee,
Oh! Heaven is dear, yet dear art thou, my love, my love to me!

There is a golden gate by which the just may enter in,
But not the soul that entertains the faintest trace of sin;
Our pastor says that earthly love is stained with dust of earth,
And that one glance of Heaven is more than all that love is worth.

If that be so, oh, let me give my last farewell to love;
And let me think no more of earth, but of the life above;
For pure and spotless would I be before I enter Heaven;
And if that love be sin, I pray, oh! may it be forgiven!

Pure as the stainless angels are, pure as the souls of light,
That know not what sin means, nor e'er have smirched their garments white.
So pure and stainless would I be before the call is given,
That summons me from earth and love to blessedness in Heaven.

Yet, O, the memory of that day! why comes it still so sweet?
One summer and its happy hours, so short, so dear, so fleet!
O, let me lay my head, dear love, one moment on your breast,
And think of it—then go from me, and leave me to my rest.

Rest! rest forever in a land where earthly love is not;
Rest where all earthly sorrows and bright joys shall be forgot!
Rest in a placid calmness, from which we never wake;
Rest in eternal gladness—O, love, my heart will break!

AFTER-THOUGHTS.

And so we parted yesterday—
He and I;
And o'er the seas he sailed away,
'Neath summer sky.
I wish his face I could forget—
It fills me with a vague regret.

We parted friends, and friends alone—
Nothing more;
And yet I cried when he was gone,
And o'er and o'er
Repeated his last words, "Goodbye!
'Tis best we part thus, you and I."

Was it not best for us to part?
I could not give
The only thing he asked—my heart?
And we could live
Much happier far apart, I knew,
Strange *now* I cannot think that true.

The sun went down into the sea
When evening fell:
I don't know how, it seemed to me
As if a spell
Came on me, too, and kept me there,
Wandering about the seashore bare.

And all his foolish words and ways
Came like a ghost
To haunt me through the twilight haze
That veiled the coast;
My heart seemed like to burst with pain—
I longed to hear his voice again.

I wish I had not served him so
On that last night,
Nor thrown his passion and his woe,
With laughter light,
Back in his face: I wish even this,
I had not turned from his last kiss.

'Tis strange my heart should feel so sore
Now he is gone;
I said we never could be more
Than friends alone;
And yet I own I loved him well
That moment when he said farewell.

ISABELLA F. DARLING,

A THOUGHTFUL and gifted poetess, was born at Stane, Shotts, in 1861, and is the second of a family of ten children. Although sent to school at an early age, she was at first a very slow scholar, and it was long before she could repeat the alphabet. Her aunt offered her a present if she would "learn her

letters," and on the following day she earned and received the prize. She soon afterwards became a very diligent and anxious pupil—so much so that she had frequently to leave school for a few weeks, as her parents were afraid that the strain might injure her health.

The family removed to Glasgow when Isabella was eight years of age. She was then sent to the Glasgow Free Church Normal School, where she made very satisfactory progress, especially in composition. Here, also, she first began to write poetry, and, strange to say, her first effusions were of a humorous character, for which, although they were very promising, she was often rebuked. The first book that interested her thoroughly was a volume of poetry she received as a prize for an essay. It contained "The Deserted Village" and some of Goldsmith's best efforts. When she was fifteen years old, the family removed to the country. She then left school to assist her mother. The change was greatly enjoyed, and rural sights and customs made a favourable impression on her poetic temperament. She says—"I often tried then to write poetry, but never could get words to rhyme. I consoled myself by composing titles for poems which I felt assured would come in due season—some of which I have since utilised. On returning to Glasgow a year afterwards, my expectation was gratified by a shower of poems. I did not hasten to write them. My memory, which often failed to commit a double verse at school, kept them all ready for repeating any moment."

For several years Miss Darling has contributed with much acceptance to the columns of the *Glasgow Herald*, the *People's Friend*, and other magazines. In her poems we find many apt utterances and felicitous ideas in really artistic setting, and never miss the mysterious *something* known as the spirit of true poetry. Her pieces are mostly on homely and reflective themes, composed during a quiet hour after the daily

duties are over in a happy home where she has received a careful religious training. Her sympathies are warm and broad. She pleads for all who are "out in the cold" through bodily or spiritual need; and it is in such utterances as her's that one detects the glad faith that transforms life's thorns into roses.

THE COTTAGE ON THE MOOR.

There is a lonely little cot beneath a moorland sky,
Where oft I've watched the wild birds flock with strange and wailing cry;
And still betimes a wandering thought,
Where brighter charms allure,
Brings back that isolated spot—
The cottage on the moor.

Once more I see the moorland hills, the crimson heath and sky;
I hail the trees as dear old friends—they nod as I draw nigh;
I see that bush where summer cast
Its roses sweet and pure;
I hear the stream that ripples past;
The cottage on the moor.

And art thou as in days of yore? Or need I lingering wait?
Will not the loved ones come once more, and meet me at the gate?
Will not the friendly voices cheer,
The loving smiles assure?
Or hast thou lost what made thee dear—
Lone cottage on the moor?

Why need I wait! No more on earth I'll hear that gentle tread,
Nor ever feel the loving hand placed kindly on my head.
Those hands, beyond life's fleeting day,
Have found a treasure sure;
The voices loved are hushed for aye
In the cottage on the moor.

They seem to beckon from afar, and though the path be long,
Yet, guided still by Bethleheim's star, I'll go where they have gone,
By heavenly messengers upborne,
To mansions bright and pure,
Amid whose joys I'll cease to mourn
The cottage on the moor.

THE WEE LOST LADDIE.

Whaur is he gaun, the wean?
Toddlin' his wee bit lane,
Oot in the drenchin' rain?
A'body's starin'.

Hoo has he lost his wey?
Whaur'll his mither stey?
We'll lend a hand, he's aye
Somebody's bairn.

Tearfu' een, big an' bricht,
Watchin' the doozie licht,
Some heart is wae the nicht,
Somebody's carin'.

Gude ken's there's mair nor ane,
Oot in the rain an' din,
Wha wad be proud to fin'
This waunart bairn.

Cheeks like the bonnie haw,
Broo like the driven snaw,
Wha busks him up sae braw?
Come, an' we'll learn.

Stockin's neat an' hame-wrocht,
My! they've haen muckle thocht,
He disna want for ocht,
This winsome bairn.

Wha dis the laddie chase?
'Mang leddies wi' their lace,
Sees he his mammie's face,
White an' despairin'?

Noo, wi' her hand ance mair
Straikin' his curly hair,
He'll ne'er again be puir,
Mammie's ain bairn.

Oh, siccan joy ower ane,
Here in this warld o' sin,
What it maun be aboon—
Kens na comparin'.

Sic joy gars angels sing,
An' a' the heavens ring,
When hame at e'en they bring
Somebody's bairn.

THE BOYS ARE AWAY.

How quiet is our home this holiday time,
There's scarcely a sound save the old clock's chime—
This bright, sunny season it ought to be gay—
I've found out the reason, the boys are away.

How silent the walls that re-echoed with mirth,
How peacefully pussy lies stretched on the hearth;
No "On, Stanley, on" wakes the echoes to-day,
The war cry is gone—the boys are away.

The minnows they brought from the river are dead,
That doleful old blackbird has never been fed,
"Poor captive, despairing, this meal take, and pray
Be off for an airing—the boys are away."

There's nothing created they might not destroy;
Their shows and ship buildings would Moses annoy;
Their room (such a scene), filled me oft with dismay,
But now how serene—the boys are away.

But mother is thinking there's something not right,
She says that our home seems so cheerless to-night,
Yet what is amissing? I'm sure I can't say—
I thought 'twere a blessing the boys were away.

"Oh, be gentle," she murmurs, "let love reign supreme,
Let love be your waking, let love be your dream,
Lest time, all defying, may bring a sad day,
When we may be sighing—'The boys are away.'

When pleasures are fading in sorrow's deep shade,
They'll seem happy days when together you played;
When fast fleeting years change their dark locks to grey
You'll whisper through tears—the boys are away.

How many are mourning the youthful and brave,
While dark billows roll o'er their fathomless grave?
Or marshalled to battle in brilliant array,
Through death shot and rattle—their boys are away.

Believe me, my dear, if you make up your mind,
In future to feel more forgiving and kind,
And cease vainly fretting o'er innocent play,
'Twill save sore regretting—when the boys are away."

And, oh, may we all, wheresoever we roam,
Grow daily more meet for our Heavenly home,
Lest bright faces haunting us there make us say—
There's something awanting—the boys are away.

HUMILITY.

There is a gem beyond all cost,
The heavenly grace I covet most,
Though of its charms I least may boast—
Humility.

For ah! should fickle fortune deign
To greet me in her smiling mein,
'Neath triumph's arch 'twere vain to feign
Humility.

And should she frown, and leave me lone,
With blighted hopes and friendship flown,
Then pride, exultant, cries begone!
Humility.

On loftiest heights of gilded fame,
In lowliest depths of want and shame,
Alas! how few hath known thy name,
Humility.

I found thee not in halls of state,
Nor in the dwellings of the great,
Though many tried to imitate
Humility.

And wretched poverty and pride,
Like sisters twain, walk side by side,
And openly with scorn deride
Humility.

Undaunted, 'mongst the wise I sought,
Who wondrous depth of knowledge taught,
I found but vanity, and not
Humility.

Alas! I sighed, I now condemn
My folly weak; this priceless gem
"I'll find in angels' diadem—
Humility!"

But Wisdom cried, "Go search thine heart,
And know thyself, even as thou art;
This knowledge sure must needs impart
Humility."

BRING THEM HOME.

Have you wealth of wishes kind?
Bring them home.

Manners cheerful and refined?
Bring them home.
Are you loved by all around?
Are your words in laughter drowned
Let the dear home walls resound—
Bring them home.

Have you pleasant words to say
Bring them home.
Have you compliments to pay
Bring them home.
Songs of sympathy or mirth?
Let them echo round the hearth,
'Tis the dearest spot on earth—
Bring them home.

Have you sorrows none can share?
Bring them home.
Would you light the load you bear?
Bring them home.
Come where gloomy cares take flight,
In the lustre of its light,
And eyes are sparkling bright,
Bring them home.

Have you friends you long to know
Bring them home.
Bring them to the warm hearth's glow—
Bring them home.
Bid them welcome as the guest
Of the hearts who love you best,
Would you put them to the test
Bring them home.

Have you precious gems of truth
Bring them home.
Let them crown the brow of youth—
Bring them home.
While the voice of Wisdom calls,
And the light of glory falls
On the everlasting walls,
Bring them home.

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD.

What is better than titles or laurels of fame,
What is richer than honours that princes may claim?
'Tis the praise of our King when the battle is o'er,
And the sound of the bugle re-echoes no more,
And he says, "Ye have done what ye could!"
Sweetest praise, ye have done what ye could.

Is she only a child who relinquished her play?
To sit by the couch where a sufferer lay,
Or bring her sweet flowers from the green woodland shade,
Or sing of that land where the flowers never fade,
Ah! he knew she had done what she could—
Kind and true she had done what she could.

Or she may be a sister, in life's morning glow,
Whose youth had been dimmed by a shadow of woe,
Yet bravely, for those loved and dear, she hath striven
To woo them to Jesus and mother in heaven;
He exclaims, "She hath done what she could!"
And proclaims, she hath done what she could.

Or a mother, who often has toiled here and wept,
In the still midnight hour, when her little ones slept;
What these frail hands accomplished none ever have known,
But her Saviour before men and angels will own
And avow, "She hath done what she could,
Crown her brow, she hath done what she could."

Oh! blessed for ever, her warfare is past,
The last shall be first, and the first shall be last,
And her heart from its sorrow shall break forth and sing,
And her day-star arise as the dawning of spring,
When she hears she hath done what she could;
Dry her tears—she hath done what she could.

CHRISTINA WHYTE,

BETTER known to general readers by her *nom-de-plume* of "Cora Linn," was born at Appin, near Oban, Argyleshire, where her father, the village schoolmaster, was a Gaelic poet of some note. Surrounded by the beautiful and romantic scenery of her birthplace, where one could almost inhale a spirit of poetry from the very atmosphere, she early developed a talent for poetical composition, and began, when twelve years of age, to contribute to the *Glasgow Examiner*, *The Commonwealth*, and the *Weekly Scotsman*.

Under the guidance of her eldest brother, who

graduated at Edinburgh University in 1866, and died at Madras the same year, she made considerable progress in poetical education. He was the best and the most trustworthy of mentors; for while he helped and encouraged all her literary efforts, he prevented undue elation by his considerate and judicious criticism.

Miss Whyte remained at Appin till the death of her father, in 1875, when she went to Glasgow, and was married to William Simpson, a chemist there, in 1882. Her married life was brief, for, after little more than two years, she was left a widow with one little boy to console her for the loss of a fond husband. For some years past she has been a contributor to the *Scottish Temperance League Journal*, *Christian Leader*, *Oban Times*, and other well-known papers. She has also had a number of beautiful poems in the *Highland Magazine*, some of which describe with fidelity and graphic language the enchanting loveliness of her native home in the Western Highlands. Much of her poetry is essentially emblematic; and over scenes of wild grandeur, as well as of quiet beauty, she throws the imagery of keen and appreciative poetic fancy, and draws lessons well calculated to elevate and soothe the feelings. It is interesting to know that one of the pieces we quote—"The Pine Tree"—was written before its author was thirteen years of age, and was published in the *Weekly Scotsman* in October, 1863.

LOVE'S COMPENSATION.

Beside my Highland mountain streams
I sang of love undying;
I wove it into waking dreams,
More gladsome than the sunny gleams,
On deep Loch Linnhe lying.

I whispered to the boughs that swayed
In green unrest above me;
And to the captured beams that played
In flickering eddies through their shade,
"Oh, for some heart to love me."

The fickle god sped far and nigh,
To those who least had sought him ;
Woke some to sing, and some to sigh,
And some to gauge their beauty by,
The prizes love had brought them.

But laughing, as he fled from me,
Cried "I am still a rover,
Content you with your mountains free,
Your wooded glens and whispering sea,
I'll come when spring is over."

. . . . .

He sought me where the Appin braes
No longer shut my home in ;
Came when my crowded city days
Left far behind those woodland ways,
And hush of hills at gloamin'.

"Oh love," I cried, "you come in vain,
When life has lost its sweetness :
Not even love, that conquers pain,
Can ever round my life again
Into its full completeness."

He smiled, and lo ! his shafts were tipp'd
With sunlight quite as golden—
(His shining wings were closely clipp'd,)
His kisses were as dewy-lipp'd,
As in those dream-days olden.

"My spells," he said, "are potent now,
As in those Highland valleys ;
The heart I touch must wake and glow,
To quaff love's bitter-sweets that flow
Into life's brimming chalice.

The woods of autumn are as gay
As in their spring-time tender ;
I give more than time takes away,
For love's divine transforming sway,
Gives life its crowning splendour."

THE PINE TREE.

The oak and beech tree naked stood
Amid a barren leafless wood
That once was seen
With summer's pearly beads bedewed,
Attir'd in green.

Now, when the sky grew dark o'erhead
And wild and far the snow was spread,
They, grey and lone,
Seem'd but to mourn their beauty fled,
Their verdure flown.

But one lone pine tree spreading there
Made the snow-covered wildwood fair
And lovely seem;
All else was desolate and bare,
But that was green.

That lonely pine tree seem'd to me
What every Christian ought to be
While yet on earth—
To stand a fair and leafy tree
And prove his worth.

When other trees are dry and dead
The pine tree proudly lifts his head,
Secure and firm;
It seems as though his boughs were spread
To meet the storm;

So should the heaven-bound Christian stand
While sore affliction's iron hand
Sweeps o'er his soul;
And soon he'll reach a better land,
A heavenly goal,—

A home where no dark winter pall,
Shroud-like and sad, shall ever fall,
Nor tempest roar—
Where one bright Spring shall smile on all
When Time is o'er!

GREEN APPIN.

Sitting alone in the evening silence,
Ever my thoughts take wing and roam
Far away to the Western Highlands:
Under the blue o'er-arching dome
Stands as of old my early home.

Cradled there amid mountains hoary,
Lulled by songs of the murm'ring sea,
Lit by flashes of noonday glory,
Or shaded by twilight tenderly,
Home of my childhood, I live in thee!

One cool green spot there haunts me ever,
Where we played in those olden days;
A lonely rock by the wood and river
Stands out clearly in Memory's gaze,
Wrapped and netted with greening sprays.

And beyond, in its eastward shadow sleeping,
(Enchanted ground of the Long Ago!)
A marshy pool, with mud-eels creeping,
Where tangled mallows and sedges show
Through the murky green of the slime below.

How we delighted with stones to scatter
Eels and tadpoles and wriggling things!
And laughed, as they cleft the troubled water,
Down to the ooze of its muddy springs
That blackened the ripples and widening rings.

And, though the years have been quickly flitting,
Bearing my beautiful Past away,
Yet now, by a city window sitting,
I stand on the rock where we used to play,
Looking out seaward athwart the bay.

This book that I vainly fix my eyes on
Melts and vanishes from my sight,
And the sea-bound line of a blue horizon
Sweeps far south in the evening light,
Studded with sparkling islets bright.

Morven and Mull, in their sunset robing,
Send a greeting across the sea
Where Cruachan towers o'er the hills of Oban,
Clothed in his purples royally,
And throned amid vassals on bended knee.

I look up gladly to Thee, All-father,
Grateful for Memory's wondrous powers,
That can in a moment round me gather
Gleams and pictures in golden showers,
That faded not with the fleeting hours.

These are the riches that will not perish!
Better far than the miser's gold!
Treasures my heart will fondly cherish,
Till Life is past, like a story told,
And the fair "New Earth" o'ershines the old!

"HIS JEWELS."

Two diamonds I possess,
Set round with tiny opals, in dead gold,
Of equal value, I have oft been told,
But far from equal in their loveliness;

For while the one has eight
Large facets, each one beautiful and bright,
From ten times eight the other scatters light,
Like wavelets when the westering sun is late.

Eight only for the one ;
And but for those remorseless cuts and keen
These starry points of light had never been,
Or slumbered unresponsive in the stone.

And could these gems have speech,
The other might have said reproachfully,
"Eight for my sister, ten times eight for me,
Should not the smiter deal the same to each?"

O heart, so deeply drowned
In surges of Life's bitterest agony ;
Thy best-loved treasure snatched so ruthlessly,
Wearing out cheerless days, so late love-crowned ;

Be comforted to know—
God, "making up His jewels," counteth thee.
Shine out, O stricken heart ! and let him see
His own reflected light up-springing glow.

Gem differeth from gem
As star from star ; each giveth out its light
As He hath fashioned it, and each is bright,
And *all* will sparkle in His diadem.

ALEXANDRA MACINTOSH

IS the youngest child of the late well-known Dr Charles Calder Macintosh, the beloved and revered minister of the Free Church, first in Tain, and afterwards in Dunoon, at which latter place she was born. Her home is now in Edinburgh. Three of the following poems have appeared in the *Christian Treasury* with the signature of "Alison." The mode of composition of the youthful writer is too simple and natural to afford material for remark, her numbers com-

ing "at their own sweet will." The following graceful and musical pieces, most of them slightly tinged with pensiveness, will speak for themselves.

A SUMMER SONG.

Blue sky over purple heather,
White clouds gleam in sunny weather,
Sing little bird on the bough;
Hum bees at your flowery labour,
Hum bees to your golden neighbour,
Little bird sing to me now.

Fir trees over grass and mosses,
Dew-brushed where the rabbit crosses,
Sing little bird on the bough;
Tall ferns where the water sparkles,
Green turf where the firwood darkles,
Little bird sing to me now.

Bright flash of the water falling,
Loud cry of the moor-fowl calling,
Sing little bird on the bough;
Quiet whirr of the grasshopper near me,
Busier far than to heed or to fear me,
Little bird sing to me now.

A THRENODY.

There's a moaning in the forest
By the sea,
Where the pine trees wave their branches
Solemnly;
There's a moaning and a wailing,
For the summer's joy is failing,
And the stout tree's heart is quailing
Mournfully.

There's a sighing in the cornfield
On the hill,
For the reapers strong are working
With a will;
There's a soft and whisper'd sighing,
As the hour is ever nighing,
When the sheaves will all be lying
Hush'd and still.

There's a weeping in the hamlet
By the shore,
Where the salt sea waves are making
Ceaseless roar;
There's a sobbing and a weeping,
For the loved ones that are sleeping
In the sea's, and in God's keeping,
Evermore.

SEA-MIST.

The long blue waves upon the golden sands
Are rolling in,
Steady their throb, as beat of heart that stands
At peace within.

There are blue hills beyond the tide, but they
Are shrouded now,
The sea-mist, stretching all across the bay,
Hangs thick and low.

Yet are they there—the fisherman who steers
His boat brown-sailed,
By compass true, doubts not, nor trembling, fears
His errand failed.

There are blue hills beyond life's restless tide;
At times we catch
Faint glimpses of their beauty, such as chide
Our faithless watch.

Why strain our eyes to pierce the mist that hides
Our future dim?
We have a Pilot who commands the tides,
Trust all to Him.

SHADOWS.

The sun sinks low in the western sky,
The shadows grow long of the pine trees high,
And the brook goes murmuring softly by.

There's a quiet brown path by the shady trees,
Where I sit and rejoice in my sweet release,
For the day is over and I am at peace.

A storm cloud came from the north to-day,
And the happy sunbeams were hidden away,
While the tempest ruled with awful sway.

This morning a storm cloud came to my life,
And I groaned and writhed in the bitter strife,
And my lot seemed dark and sorrow was rife.

At noon-tide the storm cloud passed away,
And the sunbeams chased each other at play,
While the leaves all shone in the golden day.

So at even my weary heart can rest,
For I know that my lot must be the best;
Who trusts in God is most surely blest.

The shadows are swaying upon the ground,
The trees are rocked as the wind breathes round,
And their leaves make a gentle whispering sound.

And a voice seems to say, as I sit and gaze,
"You watch while the great tree shadow sways,
Could the shadow be, were there no sun's rays?"

The shadows came over my heart to-day,
And all seemed so dark, and cold, and grey,
But the sun was shining with stedfast ray.

I forgot that no shadow could ever be,
Except when the sun was shining for me—
God's shadows are good, they come lovingly.

FRED. LOCKE

WAS born at Glasgow in 1853, and has led a wandering, adventurous life, principally in connection with the theatrical profession. His taste for the stage was early developed, for when a boy of six he used to devote every copper he got towards gratifying his craving for a sight of the "legitimate drama" as one of the "gods" in the gallery of the pretentious theatre, or within the wooden booth to which admittance could be had for a penny. When he grew a little older his bias in that direction was evident from his smartness in making models of stages, which he sold.

Mr Locke began his career as an amateur actor when seventeen years of age, and gradually drifted into the professional staff. He appeared at first in booths and theatres in Scotland and the north of England—playing all lines of character, but excelling in low comedy and "old men" characters. After a few years of this life he gave up acting, and tried journalism. Shortly after this he was asked by his friend, Mr H. Cecil Beryl, to localise the first pantomime that gentlemen produced at the Princess Theatre, Glasgow. His success in this direction was so marked that Mr Beryl commissioned him to write his next pantomime entirely, and from that time Mr Locke has been recognised as a clever pantomime author, and a writer of bright and telling lyric and topical contributions, principally for humorous periodicals. Burlesques and pantomimes of great originality, by Mr Locke, have been played at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other large towns in Scotland and England.

The following specimens of Mr Locke's style are given by the kind permission of the editor of the *The Chiel*.

LOVE REVIVED.

Young loves are passionate, they say,
And old loves faithful. Is it true?
Are they more faithful than the new?
I'd answer, yea,
And choose a love of more than yesterday.

A love revived! that love is bliss
Which in the heart for years has hid,
And wakes again to life, when bid,
By one fond kiss;
Old love revived. There is no love like this.

GOLDENHAIR *V.* GOLDENHEART.

I love my love because she's good,
And not because she's fair;
What tho' a maiden's eyes be blue,
And golden-hued her hair?

'Tis often seen that beauty masks
A heart that's false and cold,
While she who's spoken of as plain
Has got a heart of gold.

And beauty after all must fade,
'Tis but skin deep, they say,
While she who owns a heart of gold
Is beautiful for aye.
A proud, capricious beauty's slave
I don't intend to be;
Let others win the golden hair,
The golden heart for me.

THE EMBLEMS.

That we're a peaceful people
Is a fact none can deny,
But while we do not wish for war,
We keep our powder dry;
For since we've been a nation
We've shown both friend and foe
That Britons, when they get a thrust,
Return it with a blow.

Then here's to the emblem of Albion—the Rose—
And here's to the Thistle, the dread of Scotia's foes,
And here's to the Shamrock, which everybody knows,
Is the emblem of Erin so green;
While on one stem they grow
We need never fear a foe,
For in these three countries cowards ne'er are seen;
And beneath the Union Jack
We'll face any foe's attack,
In defence of British hearths, and homes, and Queen.

That Union's strength we all well know,
So while old Johnny Bull,
And Pat, and Sandy, hand in hand
Uphold Victoria's rule,
The old flag its supremacy
Will keep o'er all the world,
For well each nation knows its power,
Whene'er it is unfurled.

TRUST.

No shade of doubt should cross the path
Of love that's meant for life to last,
For doubt's a demon who can blast

Love most devout,
And stir the meekest heart to wrath—
Then banish doubt.

Trust should be helmsman of the craft
That bears true love across life's main;
Then fiercest storms of doubt are vain
As summer dust,
And by love's barque to scorn are laugh'd
When stirred by Trust.

JOHN WYPER-FERGUS,

WHO has hitherto hidden his individuality behind the euphonious *nom-de-plume* of "Vive Vale," was born in Glasgow in 1856. At school he was a very apt pupil, and carried off the first prizes in his classes for several years in succession. His first employment was as a messenger in the service of the British and Irish Magnetic Telegraph Company, Glasgow. In 1870, when the transfer of the telegraphs from the then existing companies took place, he was taken over to the Post Office service, where he still holds an important appointment in the Telegraph Department. Mr Wyper-Fergus early evinced a strong taste for literary pursuits, and this still continues unabated. When not far into his "teens" he wrote several poetical pieces of considerable merit; and eventually he attended several learned institutions in Glasgow for the purpose of acquiring as wide a knowledge of literature and as accurate a style of composition as possible, including subsequently the University, where, under Professor Nichol, he studied with much profit. Our poet is a frequent contributor to various periodicals and newspapers under the *nom-de-plume* already referred to. He writes in the tone of simple sincerity, his

utterances on the time-honoured themes of love, wedded bliss, the couthie ingleside, and Nature's beauties all breathing the sympathy of a tender, affectionate, and truly poetic heart.

YER AIN FIRESIDE.

"Will ye gang to Kelvingrove," &c.

There's real comfort aye in life
At yer ain fireside,
Wi' a lovin', tidy wife
At yer ain fireside;
An' when hiein' hame at e'en
Fancy paints a true, bright scene,
O' a hoose as snod's a preen—
At yer ain fireside.

There the guidwife's sunny smile,
At yer ain fireside,
Shines, to welcome ye the while,
At yer ain fireside;
An' when roon' the table ye
Sit, wi' Willie on yer knee,
O, hoo sweet's the crack an' tea—
At yer ain fireside.

There is naething beats the joy,
At yer ain fireside,
O' a fun-creating boy,
At yer ain fireside;
An' by joining in his play,
Ye forget the toils o' day,
Wi' his steerin' winsome way—
At yer ain fireside.

There is mirth ayont compare
At yer ain fireside,
There is pleasure pure and rare
At yer ain fireside;
A' the rest ootside is tame,
And unworthy o' the name;
It's fair Paradise at hame—
At yer ain fireside.

A SONG OF SPRING.

Nature, long asleep, awakes
At the voice and smile of Spring;
Looks around and briskly shakes

Winter's tattered garbs that cling—
Shivering garbs, hail, sleet, and snow—
To her body, shoulders, brow.

Don your other robes, dear dame,
Go not forth a phantom bare;
Call the sun, your fervent flame,
From his chambers in the air;
Bid him kiss you, clothe you now—
Make a wreath for your fair brow.

Bid him call, from other climes,
The gay warblers of the grove
To wake with their artless rhymes,
Echoes, where rapt lovers rove—
These quiet nooks, where each pair choose
Mutually their hearts to lose.

Gleams of joy! ye radiant hours,
Fill the measure of your days,
Sprinkling all the naked bowers
With white, pink, and orange sprays:
Touch, as if with magic spell,
All to life in wood and dell!

WAITING.

See that beauteous maiden there,
Tripping gaily o'er the green,
She is hasting o'er to where
Her lover, I, have waiting been.

Yes, she's hasting o'er to me,
For she knows that I am here,
Waiting 'neath the trysting tree,
Watching, till she may appear.

Saw you e'er such beauty rare
Gracing this lov'd earth of ours?
And she's true as she is fair—
Pure as are the dew-laved flowers.

O, ye zephyrs! as she seeks
Me, beneath this tree-shade gloom
Softly blow upon her cheeks—
Blow the roses into bloom!

Kiss but sparingly her lips—
Steal not all the sweets away,
For I'm jealous of the sips—
Leave them all for me to-day.

With her hair of golden wealth
Play not harshly, as it streams;
Set her eyes aglow with health,
Soon I'll bask beneath their beams.

For she's hasting o'er to me,
Well she knows that I am here
Waiting 'neath the trysting tree—
Watching till she may appear.

WEE POLLY.

Grey-eyed Mary come to me—
Come and tell me fully,
If the world is fair to see,
If all men are truly
Noble in your bairnly sight,
Pure in motive as the light?

Does the sky, through your fair eyes—
Eyes with love's streams watered—
Always wear a smile that vies
With the joys that scattered
Petty cares that once I knew
When I was a "tot" like you?

Does the earth seem fair my child—
Does the sward you tread on,
And the flowers that grow so wild
And the dews they're fed on,
Yield you joys as countless, sweet,
As the grass-blades at your feet?

Do the winds that softly breathe—
Wak'ning weird-like measures
Through the woods, and o'er the heath,
Fanning earth's rich treasures—
Carry blessings, sweet, to you,
On their wings? and viewless too!

And the feathered choirs, do they—
Mavis, lark, and merle—
As they hymn their incense lay,
Morn and evening carol,
From the tree-boughs and the sky,
Tune your heart with melody?

Yes, methinks—methinks you would
Answer me thus mild-wise:
That every man was pure and good

In your guileless child-eyes?
If you would but speak, my fay,
This is what you'd try to say!

May there never wake a day,
Happy, winsome fairy,
When the earth, that's flushed and gay,
And the folks so merry,
Darkened through heart-storms appear;
Hushed be voices that are dear!

SOL, THE GOLDEN.

Glad Summer now hath folden
The cloud-screens past on high,
And bade great Sol, the golden,
To bathe earth, sea, and sky,
With streams of light,
Warm, genial, bright—
Refreshing to the eye.

What blessings thou to Nature
Dost carry on thy beams!
What joys thou bear'st each creature
In cities, hamlets, streams—
Great Sol of old,
They can't be told—
They're countless as thy gleams.

Here fallow fields around us
Are robed in emerald dress;
Thy witching smile hath bound us
In gushing love's caress;
O eye of heaven
To thee is given
Nature and man to bless.

How changed from winter's sadness—
His frowns, his tears, and gloom,
Is summer's rosy gladness—
Her smiles, her hopes, and bloom.
We hail the time,
The year's proud prime
And mother of perfume.

I look me on the river,
And watch the gem rays play,
The merry sunbeams quiver
Like diamonds on the spray,
With poutings meet

The wavelets greet—
Snatch swift each kiss away.

I see the troutlets dashing
Adown and up the stream,
Like white-winged arrows flashing
Beneath the wizard gleam..
But where, indeed,
Would be their speed
And charms, 'reft of thy beam?

O, everything above us,
And everything below;
All we care for and love us,
All that is good we know,
Like Doom's-day drear
Would all appear,
Stript of Sol's genial glow!

DUNCAN MACLEAN,

A POET full of patriotic fervour and warm sympathies, was born at Dunoon—the beautiful watering-place on the West Coast, which has been aptly termed the Brighton of Scotland. He was brought up amid charmingly romantic scenery, and educated by a teacher who took a special pride in his more promising pupils, amongst whom was our young poet. After leaving school he was employed in the Parochial Board Office, Dunoon, first as clerk, and afterwards as assistant inspector of poor, and remained in that situation about four years.

Mr Maclean was early connected with the Good Templar movement, and on leaving his native place for an appointment in the Glasgow Post Office, he received a handsome testimonial from his temperance friends at Dunoon. After a year or two he left the postal service, and obtained a situation as clerk in the

office of the Globe Parcel Express Company, Glasgow, from which he was removed to Manchester, where he has for the past four years acted as assistant manager to the Company.

In 1880 Mr Maclean published a handsome little volume, entitled "Hamely Rhymes," which met with a most cordial reception. Since then he has been a very frequent contributor to the pages of the *Highland Magazine*, and several well-known Scotch and English periodicals. He is a pure, pleasing, and graceful writer, and all his thoughts are instinct with a warm and elevating enthusiasm. His Doric is terse, felicitous, and expressive; and while his poems on the beauties of Nature are in a fine appreciative vein, and full of graphic and picturesque description, we ever find present the natural flow of spontaneity, and the rhythm full of melody.

ETERNITY.

Ten hundred million gleaming grains of sand
That flash with light upon the sea-kissed shore,
And every drop of mighty ocean's store
That glimmers in the sunlight rich and grand,
The marv'llous product of a wondrous Hand;
The myriad hairs that deck each human head,
The teeming crowds that life's rough pathway tread,
And every breath that's breathed in every land,
And every waving blade of grass that springs,
Together with each lovely flower that smiles,
And if to these each little bird that sings
Were numbered up in years, or placed in miles,
Then multiplied by ten, how small 'twould be
Before that awful word—Eternity.

THE DAYS OF OLD.

In an alien land, in a lonely room,
I sit and I muse on the good old times,
When the heart of man, like a flower in bloom,
Laughed loud to the swing of his childish rhymes;
And I think the world was much fairer then,
When the mind was unwarped with dreams of gold;
And a wish creeps into my heart again
For a blythesome glimpse of the days of old.

I sit and I dream of an olden time,
When the warblers sang such a witching tune,
That I thought my soul heard a golden chime
That was born in a world beyond the moon.
I think and I sigh for the gladsome days
When my schoolmates romped o'er each smiling fold,
And I fain would barter all fulsome praise
For a precious glimpse of the days of old.

I sit and I think of the dear old wood
That used to blush with earth's fairest flowers;
Ere the heart was cold, or our thoughts were rude,
And the time seemed to fly on golden hours.
And I dream of the laughing youths I knew
In that wondrous world I shall ne'er behold,
And I sigh when I think that fancy's view
Is all that is left of the days of old.

In an alien land, in a lonely room,
I sit and I muse of a joyous time
When we gladly romped 'mid the heather's bloom
Free as the wind or the rivulet's rhyme.
And I sigh to think that the friends of youth
Are now in their graves, all silent and cold,
And the tears will come that are bitter, forsooth,
As I muse on the vanished days of old.

CITY FLOWERS

I bought a bunch of fragrant flowers,
Far from the calm repose of bowers,
Within a market square,
And as the scented smell came up
To cheer my heart, and fill my cup,
I thought of scenes more fair.

Once more I was a laughing boy,
Beside a brook, while streams of joy
Within my soul did sing;
Once more I heard the warblers' cries,
Once more I viewed the clear blue skies,
While life was in its Spring.

The beauteous glens, the trickling rills
That laved the sides of heath-clad hills,
Rose up before my sight;
The merry, joyous, child-like laugh
'Peared as a golden epitaph
Of childhood's wrapt delight.

Once more the whistling blackbird's song
Drowned all the noise of vice and wrong
In one grand heaven-born hymn ;
The meek-eyed lav'rock left its bed,
And soared aloft 'mid clouds o'erhead,
Piping its praise to Him.

The thousand sweets of boyhood's days
Rose up before my wond'ring gaze
Like visions in a dream—
The old church-yard, the ivied tower,
The old school-house—my mother's power,
Meet for poetic theme.

And once more gazing at the flowers
That called up all those pleasant hours,
A cloud of dark regret
Crept o'er my heart, as I thought on
The dreams of boyhood's day that's gone,
And left me in their debt.

And yet, why should I sigh and gloom?
The past is now within its tomb,
The present is our own ;
We cannot live our youth again—
To look for fruit 'mid winter rain
Is folly overgrown.

Then let us shape our lives that we
May win a high nobility,
Excelling prince's power ;
Let's work in city mart or square,
And strive to make our thoughts as fair
And spotless as a flower.

FAIR DUNOON.

The sunbeams glint fu' bonnily, the flo'rets sweetly smile,
The lintie sings its liltin' sang beside the auld stane stile,
The lav'rock in the lift sae high trills forth a merry tune—
A serenade o' love in praise o' bricht an' fair Dunoon.

Oh ! weel I min' the gowden time when a' was fresh an' fair,
I rambled owre oor bonnie hills wi' ne'er a thocht o' care,
An' tho' since then I far hae strayed in search o' fortune's croon,
Nae jewel ever met my gaze compared wi' fair Dunoon.

Oh ! weel I min' the merry days when in Glenmorag's dell
I pu'd the yellow primrose by the bonnie moss-clad well,
An' chased the painted butterfly for 'oors an' 'oors aroon'
The fairy bowers that beautify the glens o' fair Dunoon.

Oh! weel I min' the blissfu' time I speeled oor ragged hills
To watch the sunbeams kiss wi' glee the gowden tinted rills,
To list the speckled mavis or the blackie's mellow tune,
Mak' music ring wi' glee amang the hills o' fair Dunoon.

Oh! wha wad barter health an' youth for ae licht breath o' fame
That gars a callan's heart turn cauld far frae the lowe o' hame,
Or wha wad choose a monarch's walth, a puir an' feckless boon
When placed beside that lo'esome spot, Queen o' the West—Dunoon.

Oh! gin the gowden links o' youth had ne'er been snapt in twa,
Oor pleasures had been mony, while misfortunes had been sma',
Oor hearts wad sing richt merrily, clear as the lift aboon
The dappled lea (dear to the e'e) that smiles on fair Dunoon.

But Time, that strange an' mystic loon, gangs quickly cant'rin' bye,
An' mony buds o' boyhood's time noo bloom ayont the sky;
For mony hearts that lauched wi' glee when care was sleepin' soun'
Are hushed in Death's cauld slumber noo, far, far frae fair Dunoon.

Talk not to me o' riches that this hollow warl' can gie,
The gleam o' gowd I trow can ne'er bring pleasure to my e'e,
Compared wi' boyhood's mem'ries that seem to gather roun',
Waftin' me back to youth ance mair an' sweets o' fair Dunoon.

Oh! when Death, wi' his mystic touch, destroys my earthly frame,
I fain wad lay my weary heid within the sicht o' hame,
My slumbers wad be easy, an' I'd hae my dearest boon
Could I but sleep beneath the flo'ers that blaw on fair Dunoon.

SONNET—LIFE.

A mystery of mysteries is Life,
Surpassing all that Science can bring forth;
One breath of the Eternal King, and earth
Brought forth a man, with power and beauty rife,
A noble form, a creature free from strife,
Inscrutable and strange, beyond the reach
Of all the the'ries learned men can teach;
'Tis this which wounds the sceptic like a knife.
The blessed fount of Life, we ne'er may hope
To fathom in this passing world of Time,
But soon we know, bright Wisdom's gate will ope,
And then our souls will drink of the sublime.
And all our thoughts, and aspirations fond,
Will be unfolded in the great Beyond.

IN COUTHIE BUT AN' BEN.

There's rank an' goud in palaces,
  There's courtly hearts in France,
There's glamour in the giddy throng
  That mingles in the dance.
There's beauty in the diamonds braw
  That sparkle bricht an' clear,
There's grace and wit aye at the ca'
  O ilka lord an' peer,
But 'tweel, I wat, there's riches that
  Thae big wigs dinna ken,
Whaur douce contentment lauchs wi' glee
  In couthie but an' ben.

There's jewelled queens in palaces,
  There's belted knights galore,
There's falderals an' gruesome styles,
  Ne'er kent in days o' yore.
There's pomp, an' pride, an' vanity,
  That gars my heart turn sick;
I trow their wild insanity
  Wad scunner touzy Nick.
Oh city dames, wi' a' yer games,
  Yer pranks wi' "catch the ten,"
I wat ye'll find leal hearts mair kind
  In couthie but an' ben.

Oh leddies keep yer palaces,
  Yer siller, an' yer braws,
An' court yer fleetin' fallacies
  That murder nature's laws;
But gi'e to me oor hielan' hills
  Whaur flo'rets ope their e'en,
Sweet star-beams, kissed by singing rills,
  Whaur trysts ha'e aften been.
For oh there's goups o' happiness
  That leddies dinna ken,
Whaur douce contentment lauchs wi' glee
  In couthie but an' ben.

DUNCAN LAMONT,

A PURE, pleasing and thoughtful poet, who possesses a tender and deeply contemplative mind, was born in Lochgilphead, Argyleshire, in 1842. At that time his father was joiner on the estate of Sir John Orde, of Kilmory. In 1851 the family removed to Greenock, in which town our poet has since resided, and followed the occupation of a blacksmith. At intervals, however, he has been far from home and his native land, and has spent some time amid such scenes and surroundings as have given a colour and sense of variety to the otherwise monotonous round of a blacksmith's life. His school-days were few, for he was sent to work at the early age of ten years. Yet he enjoyed a fair share of that unchilled happiness which is the birthright of children. He loved everything in Nature—the birds, the flowers, and the green leaves; rambling through the woods, and romping among the heather; while the rolling of the thunder and the moaning of the storm have ever possessed a supreme charm for him. He tells us that he "dabbled early in rhyme. It was an inexpensive amusement, and, as an amusement and a solace in a quiet hour, the practice has been continued. The higher walks of poetry require a power and a leisure which are not mine, and it contents me to sing in my own way of what is to be seen in the lanes and by-ways of life. Song lightens labour, clears the inward eye, and lifts the heart above its sordid surroundings, and though the voice of one small singer be but little in the world, its warblings may cheer some sad and lonely heart."

Mr Lamont has read much and thoughtfully. This is evident from some of his lengthy and more ambitious pieces contributed from time to time to various news-

papers and periodicals. So indifferent has he been as to the fate of some of these that, although they have been popular and re-printed in this and other countries, he has preserved very few of them. One long poem, however, will shortly be published—"A Story of Highland Life"—full of romantic incidents, and evincing fine descriptive powers. Although most of his productions are lengthy, the treatment is always well sustained. One of these we would have given had space permitted—a beautiful poem entitled "The Kilmory Girl," which had been lost sight of for more than twenty years, when it was recited in presence of "one who was interested in the 'lassie.'"

"And tho' her hame be o'er the Tyne,
And Clyde past mine may whirl,
I kindly greet for auld lang syne
The fair Kilmory Girl."

He writes with a simple grace, and frequently with real pathos, without being morbidly sad. Indeed, fertile poetic flow, gentle affection, and an intelligent love of Nature are the characteristics of his Muse.

SONG.

The mornin's sun glints on the gowans that drift
In the bield o' the shadowy glen,
An' he rides like a king in the higher lift,
An' gowdens the green of the ben;
He gladdens ilk birdie that haps on the stems,
An' he sparkles on dewdraps that glitter like gems,
In the buttercup's saft-fauldin' bosom.

The yorlin that whistles owre brackeny burns,
As they wimple their way to the sea,
On some spot where the sun gleams he couthlie turns,
An' tlichters his feathers wi' glee;
An' there's no a bright thing that may glance owre the scene,
No a bee on the bud, nor a bud on the green,
But the sun mak's its beauty to blossom.

So love lichts the heights an' the howes o' our life,
An' niffers wi' gentle an' simple,
Love cheers the wee cot-house an' banishes strife,
An' graces baith palace an' temple.

O it lichtens the darg o' the hairst-rig an' byre,
An' smoothes the grey haffets that shake near the fire,
  Where the gloamin' o' life-time is stealin'.

But maist in the bud-time o' beauty love glows
  In the leal heart by sorrow unshaded,
When wi' saftness an' sweetness o' dew-drookit rose,
  An' bonnie hair buskit and braided,
Jean trips owre the loanin' at fa'in' o' e'en,
To meet her blithe lad where the branches wave green,
  An' the shades a grey glory revealin'.

TIRED.

I am weary, sad, and fretful,
  Looking o'er life's little time,
Oft unheeding or forgetful,
  If I here should sink or climb;
For life is dark, and must for ever yield
Gleams of light, but thro' a broken shield.

I am weary, and I linger
  Doubtfully amid the dark,
Waiting till some angel finger
  Point me to a brighter mark:
And in the shadow where I wait so long,
But dull mine ear with this ungrateful song.

And my weary soul is gasping
  For a breath it cannot gain,
Heart and hand for ever grasping
  Out for something, but in vain;
Deep unto deep may shrill its burdened call,
And silence swallows heart, and voice, and all.

Sorrow comes to us so love-like,
  That we cannot choose to start,
Folds its silken wings so dove-like,
  Nestles in the inner heart,
And the substance, and the shadow, and the pain,
Of that grief with us may evermore remain.

There's a flitting joy and sorrow
  That with passing hours depart,
And there is which no to-morrow
  Ever lifteth from the heart,
While it chafes in the strong-ribbed hold that bars
The path to rest that leads beyond the stars.

WRECKAGE.

Oh, look out yonder, Bob, what may that be
Caught in the floating weeds?
Some white thing like a flapping sail I see
Rippling the reeds.

A boat, a boat, which the unlucky breeze
Has blown a league too far,
And wrecked the hopes on the unruly seas
Of some brave tar.

Come, let us fetch it in, and on the shore
New-trim its battered sail,
Set it on keel again to dance once more
Adown the gale.

Our little punt is rocking on the tide,
And I can take an oar,
The sea is calm, and mother will not chide—
I've rowed before.

Thus spake a soft-eyed, sweet-lipped rosy girl
To her bright brother-elf,
As side by side they watched the light waves curl
O'er sandy shelf,

And gleam and glitter in the sun, and wash
Green weeds, and that white thing,
And lap the grey stones with a playful plash
That seemed to sing.

The languor of a luscious summer noon
Brooded o'er all below,
And the warm winds that sing their songs in June,
Breathed sweet and low.

The sunlight played along the sea's green edge,
And touched the green with gold,
Kissed the red rose-bud, quivered on the hedge,
And swept the wold.

As nimble feet along the smooth sward stir,
Joyfully light and free,
Where many a silver-glancing shingle-spur
Dips in the sea.

The light punt bobbed along the wave, and soon,
The fluttering white thing reached,
Made fast astern, and towed to Bob's best tune,
The prize is beached.

Then eager, kneeling on the yellow sand,
They o'er their treasure bow,
Turn o'er the wet woof with a trembling hand,
And lo, a brow,—

A baby brow, to which the golden curls,
Damp and dishevelled, clung,
And round the plump white throat a string of pearls
In beauty hung.

And a rich robe, embroidered fair to see,
Wrapped in its silken fold,
Chilled heart, and stiffened limbs, and symmetry
Of rarest mould.

Bound by a soft and many-twisted thong,
Bound to a buoyant plank,
This helmless rider thro' the tempest throng,
Floats o'er the bank.

A prize indeed, and never mother's eyes
Gazed with more tender might
On all the heart holds dear beneath the skies,
That gives delight,

Than did these two, as bending o'er that child,
They warmed it with their breath,
And stroked its little head and hands, and smiled
Thus to meet Death.

And while lithe Nell, to seek her mother's aid,
Along the green lawn skips,
Bob looked around, and then, as half afraid,
Kissed its cold lips.

And wondered wildly where the thing had fled
That once lit up that face,
Lived in the eye, and tinged the cheek with red,
And glowing grace,

And whether God, who made the lovely form,
And gave it splendid things,
And watched it riding with the howling storm,
Would give it wings.

That it might soar beyond the farthest star,
And fly away to heaven,
Swift as the morning's rosy-coloured car,
In triumph driven.

Just then a lady down the slant beach came
To where the babe did lie,
Unowned, unknown, and yet she found a name
To call it by.

All that was sweet she called it, and in pain
She bruised it to her breast,
And murmured something to it, as if fain
To soothe its rest.

From mother unto mother did it come,
Frail thing so passing fair,
Pure as sea's foam, and eloquently dumb
As grief's deep prayer.

The heart that warmed it, ere it broke, and gave
Its darling to the deep,
Swept over by the wild and wandering wave,
In peace may sleep.

The heart that bleeds above it now, and rocks,
And dews with many a tear,
Lives o'er the pains, and feels anew the shocks
That hurled it here.

Robed in its silken robes, and decked with pearls,
And as a lily fair,
And lacking only two soft glossy curls
Of golden hair.

She gave it back to kind, old mother earth,
To keep her charge in trust,
And wait the waking to a higher birth
Of pure and just.

And when they covered it, Bob meekly knelt,
And strove to still his breath,
Anon he clutched the grass, and wept, and felt
The sting of death.

Two glossy curls of golden hair were kept,
And one to Bob was given,
Pledge of that hour, when into life there leapt
Sorrow and Heaven.

THE SAILOR'S GRAVE.

All vainly, all vainly, by land and by sea,
Have you sought for the spot where a brother may be,
Be he living or dead, ay, living or dead,
With a thorn in his heart and dark clouds overhead,

And sheer down the blast of adversity sped,
Or slain in the battle for honour or bread,
Be calm, heart, take rest, feet, for God from His throne
Marks the fall of a sparrow, and calls it His own,
And your brother, where'er that brother may be—
Alone on the land, or engulfed in the sea—
He is dear to his God, and from far-land or foam,
In His time He shall call the lone wanderer home.

On the dark bounding billow, a motionless speck,
With no heave of the breast, save the heave of the deck,
And all tenderly, tenderly, tearfully rolled
In the cerements of death, and the dull death-bell tolled;
And his pall his own banner—the old Union Jack,
And the stout ship hove-to, and her sails all aback,
Then a few measured steps, and low "dust to the deep,"
A break in the waters, a long silent sweep,
To the green fields below, with their shells and their flowers,
And their fathomless rest that may never be ours;
Or borne on the bier by an alien race,
Not a pang in the heart, nor a tear on the face,
Does he sleep where the myrtle and palm tree grows,
And the musked wind kisses the blushing rose?
Or lies he in lands where the icy breath
Of the boreal breeze chills the blossoms to death?
These last twenty years—it is long, it is long,
Yet croon not for ever your sorrowful song,
Hope beckons you onward, faith quickens the eyes,
Till they pierce thro' the bars that would blind us, and hies
To fair regions beyond, whence the word shall go forth
To the east, to the west, to the south and the north,
And down times' long vista the message be sped,
That shall bid earth and ocean to give up their dead.

The ship may speed on, and the waters be healed,
And the sailor's lone grave in oblivion sealed;
Or the tawny-hued bearers may turn from the grave,
Over which some green branch in its beauty may wave,
And tho' never a friendly foot linger anear,
Nor a kindly eye gaze on the spot thro' a tear;
Tho' the log-book be lost of that far-speeding ship,
And tho' never a sunbeam its glory may dip
To the deeps, whose cold flowers press the still pallid lip;
Yet ever that spot is remembered of God,
And his angels keep watch o'er the covering clod,
At the blast of their trump shall the sleepers awake,
And the dead start to life when the dawning shall break.

Then old-time companion, take courage, and now
Pluck the pain from your breast, dash the weeds from your brow,
And sing we of higher and holier things
Than the ashes of urns, or the sceptres of kings;

Snatch the good from the hour which the hour has to give,
And learn in the light of the living to live,
Nor disturb with the sound of a wandering foot
The dust that must bloom into lovelier fruit.

WILLIAM WHYTE,

A VERSATILE writer, whose career has been somewhat chequered, was born in 1821 at Biggar, in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire— when, he informs us, "both the village and I were young, and when the simple-minded folk could show you Wallace's Chair, where he scanned the army of Edward, and no doubt planned the battle. Adjacent, also, was a clear spring named Wallace's Well, which, the old people said, had tasted long of whisky. Four miles north-west is Tintock, from the 'tap' of which the great warrior slung stones into the English Camp, but in slinging a rather large one it split in two—one half landing at Lanark, and the other at Strathaven. These may be seen to this day lying about seven miles apart from each other." William's first schoolmaster had been intended for the Church. At college he showed a stronger inclination for whisky than theology, and ultimately took to teaching, but though a kindly man, he was not successful. Young Whyte was next sent to the High School at Dalkeith, but he did not learn much there, though his teacher was a very accomplished man and idolised by his scholars. The protected game in the Parks of Buccleuch, Melville, and Lothian presented temptations to a boy who had never seen a gamekeeper, and who was a "born poacher." He bought an old flint barrel in the Cowgate of Edinburgh, got it renovated and mounted—Jamie Porteous, the tailor, making deep pockets in his coat so as to

hold stock and barrel separately. Thus equipped he went for "pheasants at night on the trees in Melville Park, and hares in daylight on the Duke's grounds." One Sunday afternoon he was caught by "Wattie Broon, the second keeper." He was fined 10s for the poor of the Parish of Dalkeith—his judges being the head-keeper and an assistant.

These escapades did not meet with the approval of his parents, and he was taken back to Biggar, and sent to school. He had to tramp three-and-a-half miles, and the road was lonely. "Looking down the glen from here," (Biggar) he says, "the school and teacher's house seemed little larger than a couple of bee-hives, but towards it trooped many a band of happy urchins, some of whom came from greater distances than I did. Culter, Glenholm, Broughton, Tweedsmuir, all with schools of their own, sent a contingent to Kilbucho."

After leaving school, our poet was sent to a clothier in Edinburgh, but, disliking the counter, he joined the Navy and went on board a ship in which only nine in a crew of 750 could write, a fact that gave Whyte, who had a fair education, an immense advantage. He liked the Navy well, but "repeated letters from home, stating that mother's hair was getting grey, and her health failing," made him consent to be "bought off." He next turns up in Manchester as manager of a London publishing firm, with whom he remained sixteen years, and at present he earns his livelihood by dealing in articles of *vertu*, for the sale of which he has an influential connection.

Mr Whyte is about to publish a selection of his poems in volume form. The work will narrate many of the curious and amusing incidents he has experienced in the course of his "Bohemian Life," and will doubtless meet with much popularity. For many years he has contributed in prose and verse to newspapers and periodicals. His productions are evidently those of a man of original talent, and who is clearly possessed

of considerable literary culture. His poetical thoughts are wedded to musical expression, and the wide range of topics shows a mind at home with elevated ideas, and open to simple pleasures.

THE WATER ROTTEN.

He sat on a stane by the river's bank,
And twirled his whiskers neatly,
While rustlin' through the sedges dank
His wife came dancin' featly.

A bonnie rat wi' a wee broon heid,
And a tail like a pipe-shank slender,
And she swam the stream wi' a rotten's speed,
And sat doon by her husband tender.

And they sat and they glowered in ilk ither's e'en
And rottie said to his sposa—
"There ne'er was a wife, and there ne'er was a scene,
And there ne'er was a neuk sae cosie."

The troot swims under the stane where we sit,
The midge on the pool is dancing,
And in that pool I see my pet,
And watch her ringlets glancing.

Then whoop, hurrah, for a rotten's life,
By lonely pool and sedges,
And three cheers mair for a rotten's wife,
And matrimonial pledges.

I'D PLAY THE FULE AGAIN.

A halflin' laddie at the schule,
And you a lassie wee,
Ye taught me first to play the fule
By lookin' in your e'e;
I've look't till mine were wet wi' tears,
For something boded pain:
Yet gi'e me back my twenty years
I'd play the fule again.

A callant next at seventeen,
And you thirteen and twa,
Sax miles at nicht to see your e'en
Was coonted nocht ava.

Was coonted nocht—love lauched at fears,
O' leagues i' sun or rain ;
Oh gi'e me back my twenty years
To play the fule again.

Oh early days o' youth and truth,
When twa hearts beat like yin,
A' dreamless o' the warld's ruth,
An' blameless o' its sin.
Sic life was oors, an' still it cheers,
When sittin' a' my lane,
I see your face thro' thirty years,
An' play the fule again.

WILL O' ELLANGOWAN.

Health to his bonny English wife,
High may her fire keep lowin',
And bonny be her blended life
Wi' Will o' Ellangowan.

I've kenned him lang, and lo'e him weel,
As mountain lo'es the rowan—
A kindly and a clever chiel
Is Will o' Ellangowan.

May fortune stalk him through this warl'
Till neck and knee are bowin',
And ever find a cantie carle
In Will o' Ellangowan.

And when the divot's on his breast,
The yew tree o'er him growin',
Unsullied ever be the crest—
Bertram of Ellangowan.

MY DOG ANDREW.

Oor cronies a' hae left us,
Creep close, ye never snap,
My wiry little scientist,
My clever little chap.

Look up into my face, man,
And tell me, gin ye ken,
What mak's ye mair than ither dogs,
And mair than mony men?

Nae doot ye hae had ancestors,
But were they sic as you?

Did thochts as geometrical
Lie 'neath their level broo?

Or has Nature run a giant joke,
And made but you yersel?
Lay back your lugs, ye puzzling dog,
And tell, if ye can tell.

Curriculum collegiate,
Ye never struggled through,
Nor linked ye with the learned lot
In pulpit or in pew.

Where'er ye got your gifts frae,
I'll agitate your claim
To occupy a pedestal
With those of highest name.

Westminster yet may ope her gates
And strengthen Darwin's creed,
And ye'll no disgrace the family
Of Briton's noblest breed.

THE LASS THAT WADNA LO'E ME.

Ken ye wha lives by red Cardon,
Wham Tintock throws his shadow on?
Where Tweed comes lippin', deep and lone—
The lass that wadna lo'e me.

She said your conduct's no been clean,
Ye're no the man ye could hae been,
The tears were blindin' baith her een,
And yet she wadna lo'e me.

Upon her breist her hand she laid,
And lookit oot like ane afraid
That life could scarcely then be staid—
But still she wadna lo'e me.

She laid her hand upon my heid,
And, greetin', wished we baith were deid;
Her grave is green on Walston Mead—
She died, and wadna lo'e me.

Yet while the heath-bird roond his hame,
Exulting crests his crimson kame,
Aye dear to me shall be the name
O' her that wadna lo'e me.

ISABELLA STUART,

A GRACEFUL and cultured writer, and authoress of several tales, essays, and volumes of poetry, was born at Balgonie, Markinch, Fifeshire. Her father was the owner of the Flax Works there, and Miss Stuart resided in the home of her childhood until four years ago, when she removed to Cambridge, to be near her brother, Professor Stuart, M.P. She received her education from tutors at home, along with eight brothers, and has written verses since her childhood. Indeed most of the pieces in a handsome volume of "Poems," published by Messrs James Nisbet & Co. in 1869, were written before she was sixteen years of age. The volume referred to has the following dedication—"These verses are dedicated to my mother, as the source of anything that they may contain of worth or of truth, and as the tenderest judge to whom I can commit their many imperfections."

Miss Stuart, under various *noms-de-plume*, has gained prizes in connection with the *People's Journal* competitions, and she has also been a frequent contributor of stories, essays, and sketches in prose and verse to various periodicals and magazines. Her prose productions are characterised by much telling ease in narration, rich command of language, graphic portraitures of character, lively, thoughtful, and instructive colloquies, and animated descriptions of scenery. The same might be said of some of her lengthy poetical narratives and ballads. Fine literary workmanship is not the chief merit of her Muse, for she truly possesses, in no small degree, the poet's temperament and the poet's gift of expression. Indeed, there is a fulness in her descriptive efforts which is more than mere word-painting, and she mingles the outward aspect of Nature with touches of the inner beauty that underlies all natural scenes.

THE BOUQUET.

Of summer flowers
And woodland bowers
You bid me frame my rhyme;
And fit my strain
To such refrain
As fairy blue-bells chime.

'Tis scarcely fair,
That one who ne'er
Amongst the flowers may rove,
You ask to sing
Of buds that spring
By mountain, stream, and grove.

Yet at command
I try my hand
Our wildlings sweet to praise;
But will not sing
Of flowers that spring
In gardens' cultured maze.

Nor yet will I
Exalt on high
One blossom o'er the rest;
For every one
I look upon
In something seemeth best.

The heather brown,
The mountain's gown,
Must Scotia ever sing;
And loved by all
Are blue-bells small
Which little fairies ring.

In foxglove bell,
As stories tell,
These fairies you may meet;
And where the rill
Runs clear and still
The meadow-queen blows sweet.

And violets blue,
And pansies too,
In spring our woodlands grace;
Nor must forget
By these to set
The primrose' modest face.

And pluck, I pray,
The campion gay
That in the meadow bides;
And then we'll look
The shady nook
Where pale woodsorrel hides.

And fern-leaves green,
We'll cast, I ween,
Into our basket too;
And gladly greet
The daisy sweet,
That blooms the whole year through.

And flushed or pale
The wild-rose frail
Our bouquet still must grace;
Laburnum bright
I deem it right
Beside the rose to place.

Then golden broom
Demands a room,—
Lack we one blossom yet!
A blue flower small,
Beloved by all,
Its name, can'st thou forget?

THE GATHERED PLAID.

Bright-eyed, brown-haired Dorothy,
Oh, how she loves the spring—
The spring that brings the bud and leaf
And sweet flowers on its wing—
The spring that wakes the wild birds' strain
And bids the waters run;
But best of all his gladsome gifts
She loves the springtide sun.

It sparkles on the waters,
It dances 'mid the boughs,
And now athwart her cottage door
Its yellow radiance throws,
Till like some saint in picture
The peasant maiden stood,
From bare brown head to bare brown feet
Wrapt in a golden flood.

But while the sun is shining bright,
And all the world is glad,

Why is sun-loving Dorothy
So pensive and so sad?
"Oh, lilies, lilies of the field
Who toil not, neither spin,
You always find your stainless robes
When sunny days begin;

While I"—Alas, poor Dorothy,
She gazes on her plaid,
Whose every stain and every darn
The searching light displayed—
"I toil and spin for ever,
From sunny morn till night,
And cannot get a poor green plaid,
Far less fair robes of white."

"Oh, lilies, happy lilies,"—
The brown eyes overflow,
But soon hope dashed the drops away
That dimmed their steady glow,
For lo! the thought inspired her—
"I'll seek the hill each morn,
And glean the wool the sheep have left
On bramble, whin, and thorn—

And gather for myself a plaid,
And spin and weave it, too;
So lilies, lilies of the field,
I'll find my robes like you."

II.

So day by day, when rising sun
Had gilt Ben Arty's head,
With lightsome step fair Dorothy
Along his rough side sped,
With eager hand from whin and thorn
Her woolly spoil to win;
Then haste her downward to her home
Ere works of day begin;
Her brow so broad, her lips so fresh,
Her eyes so calm and true,
Her face once seen had'st scarce forgot
A whole long lifetime through.

But other feet than Dorothy's
Prest brown Ben Arty's side,
And eyes as keen amid his crags
A search as eager plied;
A scholar pale, whom fates perverse
Had doomed to factories' din,
Stole forth a space at dawning day
The wildflowers sweet to win,

And worship at great Nature's shrine,
And sigh that perverse fate
To studious nights and days of toil
Should close her golden gate.

And so it fell, when eastern beams
Had fringed the mountain crest,
That face to face those gleaners met
Upon his heathy breast;
The maiden's gathered skirt o'erflowed
With streaks of fleecy wool—
With firstlings of the northern spring
The scholar's hands were full.

And all throughout the joyful spring
Their quest these gleaners plied,
No longer sadly and alone,
But gaily side by side;
For still he holds, the scholar,
That where he meets the maid
Forever springs the sweetest flowers
In brightest tints arrayed,
And she maintains, sweet Dorothy,
Still for her plaid in quest,
That whereso'er the scholar leads
She finds the wool flakes best.

III.

All through the summer twilights,
So long-drawn and so cool,
Sat Dorothy beneath the trees
To spin her gathered wool;
And he who saw it gathered
He also saw it spun,
Then he watched the flashing shuttle
Till the little web was done.

And the first time that she wore it
She was by the scholar's side,
When it formed the only mantle
Of a poor but happy bride;
But ere long has science owned him
And crowned him with her spoils;
Then Dorothy has many robes,
And neither spins nor toils;
Then far before all riches,
In toilette wealth displayed,
Doth Dorothy admire and prize
Her faded gathered plaid.

It had cradled all her children,
Who now gaze with rev'rent eyes

On the old box from the cottage
Where the sacred garment lies ;
For in the warp and woof thereof
Her tale of love was spun—
She had worn it at her bridal,
And when life's long race was run,
When hushed in rest forever
That loving heart was laid,
Her children round the placid breast
Have wrapped her Gathered Plaid.

GROWING GREY.

Youthful locks, that o'er my shoulders
Roll rebellious from your bands,
When shall first one thread of silver
Mingle with these dark-brown strands ?

Shall I, dressing for some festal,
Smoothing you from off my brow,
First behold time's silver herald
Mingling with your dusky flow ?

Shall mine eyes, o'erworn with weeping,
Wandering round in vacant woe,
First behold time's onward footstep
Stamped amid my locks in snow ?

Or shall some small, waxen finger
Pause to trace, in childish play,
'Midst mamma's dark, braided tresses,
One pale thread of silver grey ?

Shall I mark you slowly paling,
Year by year, and day by day ;
Fading 'neath time's icy fingers,
Glossy brown, to shining grey ?

Or shall one o'erwhelming sorrow
Cast, as mournful poets write,
O'er your lustrous, youthful darkness,
In a moment, age's white ?

Shall I grieve to mark you fading,
And look back, with mournful ruth,
On the glossy, dark-brown tresses
That I decked in early youth ?

Shall I gladly hail the silver
Footprints of years passed away,

Leading onward to the bright land
Where young locks grow never grey?

Or with me, my dark-brown tresses,
Shall you, by the cloudy way,
Steal, in all your youthful darkness,
Past the boundary of decay?

THE DEATH OF TIME.

Last night I dreamt at midnight hour
A strange, half-waking dream;
Thick shadows over earth did lower,
And not a star did gleam
The darkness of the sky to break—
All round was blackest night;
And lying here, but half-awake,
I saw a vision bright.
Methought I saw the spirits who
Have power o'er men below,
Until they pass the grave's arch through,
To work them joy or woe.

First Pleasure, with her flowery crown,
In distance very bright;
But once man calls that wreath his own
It loses all its light.
And close behind was sparkling Love,
With wings that golden shone;
So, like Him of that name above,
Men sometimes call them one.
He shed a vain, deceiving light
O'er all he hovered round:
Made blackest pits seem valleys bright,
Vile heads with glories crowned.
There hastes stern Truth, and rends the veil
Of glamour from man's eyes;
Love's golden wings and crowns are pale,
He laughs, and mocks, and flies.

Then Mirth, that lightener of our care,
With Hope came hand in hand;
And Memory, the three most fair
Of all the spirit band.
Mirth all in forest green was clad,
With forest flowers was crowned;
And her sweet smile, so free and glad,
Shed brightness all around.
Hope, in a robe of rainbow hue,
And ruby-circled head,

Held better days before man's view,
And future glories shed.
With locks beset with violets white
Slow glided Memory pale;
And o'er her form, so sadly bright,
There flowed a silver veil,
Which veil at times aside she cast,
Upholding to man's eye
Tears long since shed, and deeds long past,
And hopes long since gone by.

And hard by Hope, strong Courage stands
With burnished armour bright;
There Justice spreads her stainless hands,
And waves her banner white.
And in the midst, with star-wreathed brow,
Ambition stood, his eyes
With Hope and Courage all aglow
Uplifted to the skies;
So high was his aspiring trance,
So lofty was his mind,
He never cast a backward glance,
Nor marked how close behind
Pale Envy, Vengeance, and cruel Hate
In horrid conclave stand.
Despair and Woe, his sister, wait
Attendants on that band.

Then Crime, in robe of midnight black,
With gory hands now neared;
And, following hard upon his track,
Pale haggard Want appeared;
Passion and Pride, too, hovered near
In robes of fiery hue;
And far behind was dastard Fear,
Half-shrinking from ths view;
And over all, with sharpened dart,
Strode Care, with gloomy frown;
For ere we from this earth do part
He finds us late or soon.

And last of all, old Time is seen
Slow, surely creeping on;
And with his scythe, sharp and keen,
He cut the others down.
Yes, cut them all; they fell before
These stealthy strokes each one;
Even lingering Memory is no more,
Old Time stands all alone.
No, not alone; some other nears,
Time drops his scythe keen,
Time shrinks, Time melts, Time disappears,
Eternity is seen!

ALEXANDER JOHN FORBES WEDDERBURN,

WHOSE father we sketched in our Sixth Series, is a native of the village of Longside, Aberdeenshire, well-known as the scene of the labours of the Rev. John Skinner, author of "The Ewie wi' the Crookit Horn" and other ever-popular poems. He was born in 1866, and at an early age attended the Boys' Public School in Longside, where he remained until his fourteenth year. He then left for the Peterhead Academy, and continued there for upwards of a year, making considerable progress in his studies. In his fifteenth year we find him apprenticed to a firm of solicitors in Peterhead, where he at present is shorthand writer, or correspondent under the junior partner, with charge of the law department.

Our poet for several years has been paying his respects to the Muse—a fact known only to one or two most intimate friends, as he writes in the *People's Friend* and other periodicals and newspapers under the *nom-de-plume* of "Hope." He has composed several poems that possess the true "ring," and that give evidence of his being gifted with the divine afflatus. He has also written several effective and lengthy dialogues for recitation at social gatherings in connection with Mutual Improvement Societies, of which he is an active member. His shorter pieces show scholarly taste, a fine imagination, and occasionally much feeling.

TA'EN AWA'.

The lintie singin' on yon tree
  Seems sadder in its strain,
The blackbird's whistlin' notes to me
  Bring memories o' pain;
They min' me o' the lichtsome heart,
The twinklin' e'e defyin' art,
  Ance sunbeam o' oor ha',

The voice that aye wi' kindness rang
O' Maggie, ta'en awa'.

Could youth hae turned the blow aside,
Or beauty claimed delay,
Then Maggie surely hadna died,
Death then had lost its sway.
But ah, the stern impartial han'
Ne'er stays its course at youth's comman'—
Ne'er halts at beauty's ca'—
Death aften culls the buddin' floo'rs,
An' carries them awa'.

Tho' sair I feel grief's bitter pang,
An mourn her lost sae sune ;
Yet, thro' the clouds that overhang,
Glints sweetly frae abune
Hope's gentle ray, my steps to guide
On 'mid this world's dark heavin' tide,
To yonder mansions braw,
Where Maggie waits to welcome me,
Ne'er to be ta'en awa'.

DEAD.

Gone with the summer flowers, gone with the falling leaf,
Fled to sweet angel bowers, freed from all care and grief,
Gone to dwell 'mong the white-robed band,
To tune her harp in yon bright land.

Like bud of promise rare, by cruel frost laid low,
So virtuous, so fair, she fell by death's swift blow ;
Torn from our sight we mourn the more,
She ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

"THE GOWDEN RULE."

The path o' life is fu' o' holes to catch unwary feet,
Black howes o' grief, teugh knots o' care, that nearly gar ane greet,
Yet aft the road wad smoother seem did a' the course pursue,
O' "do to others as ye would that they should do to you."

When on the face o' fortune's brae ye see a man sair tried,
Wha, struggle, struggle as he may, does only backward glide,
Ne'er lift yer han' to help him doon, e'en tho' 'twad better you,
But "do to others as ye would that they should do to you."

Wi' "charity begins at hame" ne'er greet the cry for alms
That pinchin' hunger aft compels in spite o' manly qualms,

If naething else, a kindly word ye surely canna rue,
It's treatin' ithers as ye would hae ither folks treat you.

If 'mang yer neebours ony ane should chance to gang agee,
Then dinna preach his failin's roon' nor look wi' scornfu e'e;
Should naething gude be yours to say just keep a weel-shut mou'—
Oh, "do to others as ye would that they should do to you."

When earth an' a' the things o' time hae meltit into space,
An' saints shall stan' in bliss supreme afore the Father's face,
Methinks the watchword then will be ayont the bonnie blue,
"Do unto others as ye would that they should do to you."

MY AULD VERGE WATCH.

Some bards, by Nature's nymph inspired,
An' some, by love's fierce passions fired,
Pathetic ditties chant;
Some, gifted wi' a martial vein,
Sing warrior deeds in warlike strain,
The battles' bloody rant.

Nae stirrin' themes like these I choose,
But humbly here invoke the Muse
To wauken at my ca',
An' praise my trusty auld verge watch—
I'm sure I haena seen her match
Sin' towmon's fifty-twa.

Unlike yer slim Geneva things—
A' fu' o' wheels an' fine hair-springs—
Inventit for the trade;
Tho' mony a year her roons she's steered,
Frae honest truth she's seldom veered,
Or turned awa' her head.

But folks themsel's, wi' wills to guide,
Hae aft been kent to turn aside
An' act a dootfu' part;
Sae gin at times my watch has hid
The truth, excuse a random whid—
She's sterlin' at the heart.

Ae glance at her gude open face
Sen's mem'ry flyin' aff apace
To yon bricht morn lang gane
I got the watch, then but a boy—
In fact I nigh gaed daft wi' joy
To think she was my ain.

Tho' noo the charm has left her tick,
That ance could gar the bluid fu' quick
Gang coursin' thro' ilk vein,
Still she is dear to me an' mine—
Ae relic left o' auld langsyne—
A link in memory's chain.

ROBERT CHALMERS,

ONE of the numerous sweet-voiced Aberdeenshire "linties," was born in the "Granite City" in 1862. His father was a common seaman, and his education was somewhat scanty. Before his eighth year, and just when able to read a little, he had to leave school and find employment in a local ropework, where he spun and heckled for several years. He is presently employed as a granite polisher in his native city.

From the time he left school till now, Chalmers has been a diligent reader, and has thereby acquired a fair knowledge of the current literature of the country. Poetry has always had a great charm for him; indeed, it has been one of his chief delights. When about ten years of age he one day happened to lay his hands on a volume of Burns' poems, which he read and studied from beginning to end. Through the perusal of those heart-moving songs he became in a measure imbued with the spirit of poesy. Afterwards, everything in the shape of poetry was anxiously sought for, and as eagerly read. Before his fourteenth year he had begun to express his thoughts in verse, and since then he has written numerous pieces, most of which, however, he has destroyed—these being, as he thought, the productions of an immature mind. It is only of late that he has ventured on sending his productions

to the editors of local newspapers, and these he has had the pleasure of seeing in the poet's corner—principally in that of the *Dundee Weekly News*. Although personally of a retiring and unassuming disposition, Mr Chalmers, on the discussion of congenial subjects, is able to express his thoughts fluently, thus showing that he has made good use of his extensive reading. His Muse treats her subjects feelingly and effectively. He delights to picture such quiet scenes as shady dells and murmuring streams, and depict the homely joys and sorrows of humble life with warm poetic fervour and sympathetic feeling.

A SIGH FOR HAME.

In yonder leafy den
  The birdies sweetly sing,
But the music frae their wee throats
  Nae joy to me can bring;
For I'm far frae hame an' freens,
  And oh, I canna see
The bonnie heather hills
  O' my ain countrie.

Last nicht I had a dream,
  An' I thocht I wandered near
To a' the fairy haunted spots
  That memory hauds sae dear;
I thocht I saw the mill,
  An' the cot beside the Dee,
An' the bonnie heather hills
  O' my ain countrie.

But aft I heaved a sigh,
  An' I felt the risin' tear,
For I couldna see the faces
  O' the freends I lo'ed sae dear
They had ta'en their last fareweel,
  An' were sleepin' peacefully,
Near the bonnie heather hills
  In my ain countrie.

That happy dream is gane,
  An' oh! my heart is sair,
The cherished scenes o' auld langsyne
  I'll see them nevermair;

An' tho' Fortune woos me here,
Yet its favours I would gi'e
To speel ance mair the hills
O' my ain countrie.

BE A MAN.

Steady, brother, do not waver,
Chase despondency away ;
Never heed a fool's palaver,
Act a hero's part to-day.

What tho' malice scorn and jeer thee,
Do not sink beneath its ban ;
Ne'er let idle nonsense fear thee,
Stand your ground, and be a man.

What tho' poverty is pinching,
Ne'er let gloomy thoughts have birth,
But with courage true, unflinching,
Fight the petty cares of earth.

Tho' thy path be clouded over,
Tho' thy life be mixed with gall,
Tho' about thee dangers hover,
Boldly stand and face them all.

Struggle on, nor feel despairing,
Drink of hope's refreshing stream ;
Hear the poet's voice declaring—
"Life is not an empty dream."

Free thyself from useless fretting,
While fresh ardour fills your soul,
Onward still, the past forgetting,
Strive to reach a higher goal.

Battle bravely with temptation,
If it chance to bar your way ;
Have a firm determination
Duty's summons to obey.

Stick to truth, and falter never,
Aye sweet virtue's cause defend,
Wrong must die and sink for ever,
Right will triumph in the end.

THE WEE THACKIT COT.

Aftimes when I'm thrang wi' the cares o' the warl',
When sorrow is crushin' me doon,

When Fortune, instead o' a smile, gi'es a snarl,
An' dark cloods are hangin' aboon,
To a sweet shady spot in a glen far awa',
My thochts will aye longingly turn
To the dear mossy well an' the sweet birken shaw,
And the wee thackit cot by the burn.

It was there wi' my guileless companions I played,
In youth's rosy mornin' sae fair;
A' licht-heartit bairnies, we carelessly strayed,
Ere we kent ocht o' sorrow or care,
Then the earth seemed to us a sweet garden o' flo'ers,
An' we'd nae sad misfortunes to mourn,
But contented we spent a' the lang simmer 'oors
Near the wee thackit cot by the burn.

I can min' weel the time when my Mary I woo'd,
And love in my bosom was fain;
'Neath the auld birken tree a'e gloamin' we stood,
When I ask'd her if she'd be my ain;
I saw by the love-licht that shone in her een,
That my offer she wadna spurn,
Sae we buckl'd at ance, an' she reigned like a queen
Ower the wee thackit cot by the burn.

But the freends o' my youth-time are a' deid an' gane,
An' my Mary's awa' wi' the lave—
On life's dreary road I maun wander alane,
For noo she lies cauld in the grave;
But her spirit kens joy in a bricht, sunny clime,
An' can ne'er to this warl' return;
Still I canna help thinkin' on yon happy time
In the wee thackit cot by the burn.

ONLY A POET.

Only a poet, yet bringing to light
Secrets deep hidden in Nature's breast,
Making our paths more pleasant and bright,
Calming the soul of its sad unrest;
Lifting our thoughts from the things of earth,
Dealing death-blows at each selfish aim,
Giving new thoughts and actions birth,
Stirring our hearts with a purer flame.

Only a poet, yet breathing love
To Nature's queen in her fairest bowers,
Skimming the azure vault above
With the soaring lark in the morning hours;
Away on the wings of fancy borne,
Joining his voice with the angel throng,

Greeting with joy the blushing morn,
Sweet'ning our lives with his gleeful song.

MARY FRASER,

AUTHOR of a neat little volume of poems, entitled "Restful Rhythms by M. F." (Edinburgh: James Taylor, 1878). She is the fourth daughter of the late James Gordon, Esq. of Manar, Aberdeenshire, where she was born in 1852. She was married in March, 1878, to Arthur M. Fraser, Esq., barrister-at-law, London. In addition to the selection of poems already referred to, verses by Mrs Fraser have frequently appeared in the pages of several magazines and collections of sacred poetry, both at home and abroad. Her thoughts are always melodious and suggestive of much spiritual insight. A keen observer of Nature and of passing events around her, she, with much delicacy of touch and true poetic feeling, conveys to her readers what she evidently so strongly feels herself, thus touching the heart and leading to self-communing. Her views of life and duty, as expressed in her verses, are elevating, and show the earnest breathings of a deeply religious devotion and noble Christian thought. Such poems as "An Exceeding Bitter Cry" and "A Message" evince the broad-hearted and sympathetic poet; and the depth of her feeling with human suffering is such as is calculated to cheer and comfort the saddened heart, or draw pity from the callous soul.

WORDS.

Words, tender words, they rain like dew
Upon the weary heart,
Refreshing with their balmy breath,
And cheering every part.

Words, angry words, ah! these are fire
That scorch with their fierce glow,
And lay black ashes in the heart,
Where flowers used to blow.

Words, idle words, as light as air,
And soon like bubbles gone,
Forgotten here, but up on high
God registers each one.

Words, earnest words, the true and strong,
Oh speak them while you may,
For they can win the wanderer back
To tread the narrow way.

Words, holy words, Lord give us these,
Our lips are not our own,
Oh fill them with Thy messages,
And keep them Thine alone.

A MESSAGE.

It was only a poor street minstrel
Singing along his way,
But the words of the hymn were wafted
To the chamber where I lay,
And they came as a holy message
From the Lord Himself that day.

I had grown so fretful and weary,
And my weakness made me sigh,
When softly the words came to me
"We shall sing in the sweet by and by;"
Ah yes, the sighing is only here,
There's a singing land on high.

The past may be shrouded in sorrow,
The present lack sunshine fair,
But a future bright awaits thee
With thy Saviour over there,
When the glory and the gladness
Shall banish all thy care.

The minstrel ended his singing,
And went on his humble way,
But I thanked God for the message
He had brought to me that day,
And I prayed some other lonely heart
Might be gladdened by his lay.

SAVONAROLA'S LAST SLEEP.

Right tenderly the black-robed monk
Supports the wearied head,
Which sleeps the sleep of God's beloved,
Calm as the dead.

Outstretched upon the cold stone floor
The worn frame lies at length,
His stalwart limbs by tortures grim
Bereft of strength.

This last repose on earth for him
No foe dares to molest,
The next will be in glory's land,
On Jesus' breast.

But see! his wan lips, e'en in sleep,
Rare smiles of gladness show,
While moonbeams cast a halo bright
Upon his brow.

Then slowly, slowly night dispersed,
From every corner dim,
Through the barred windows stole the dawn,
And gazed on him.

His eyes have oped to greet the light,
Life's latest day has come,
The breath of that May morning sweet
Brings martyrdom.

REMEMBER.

The past, with all its hopes and fears,
With all its smiles and all its tears,
Its stormy and its sunny days,
Its flowery and its rugged ways,
Remember.

It never can return again,
Gone are its pleasures and its pain;
But they have left a memory
Which ever will abide with thee,
Remember.

Give to the present all thy power,
And dream not of the future hour;
To-day alone canst thou call thine,
No morrow's sun on thee may shine,
Remember.

The distance lying dim and drear,
How oft we long to see it clear;
But through the darkness of the night
'Tis faith that guides our steps, not sight,
Remember.

Now, looking back thou mayest see
How good the Lord has been to thee,
How groundless often were thy fears,
How needless often were thy tears,
Remember.

COMPARISONS.

After tired tossing,
Fighting with foam;
After waves washing,
Haven and home.

After wound fever,
Healing and balm;
After winds warring,
Quiet and calm.

After hard rowing,
Resting the hand;
After long sowing,
Reaping the land.

After sore crying,
Learning to sing;
After far flying,
Folding the wing.

After wild terrors,
Freed from alarms;
After sad errors,
Wrapped in love's arms.

After dark dungeon,
The hill-top free;
After earth, heaven—
What will it be?

AN EXCEEDING BITTER CRY.

A cry from dismal alleys,
Where the sunbeams fear to shine;
A cry from loathesome cellars,
Where the outcast herd like swine;

A cry from lonely sickbeds,
Where sufferers pine for death ;
A cry from stifling garrets
Whose air is poisoned breath.
Oh the bitter cry of London,
It keeps ringing in our ears,
The cry of outcast London,
Who can hear it without tears

The cry of helpless women,
The cry of hopeless men,
The cry of starving children,
For food to nourish them ;
A cry from dens of darkness,
Where Satan's strongholds lie,
A cry from prisoned souls fast bound
With chains of slavery.
Oh the bitter cry of London,
It keeps ringing in our ears,
The cry of outcast London,
Who can hear it without tears ?

A cry that none can silence,
A cry that nought can drown,
A cry that rises night and day,
From the sad hearted town ;
A cry for tender pity,
A cry for love and light,
A cry for help and healing,
For freedom and for right,
Oh the bitter cry of London,
It keeps ringing in our ears,
The cry of outcast London,
Who can hear it without tears ?

Like a mighty ocean surging,
The flood of evil rolls,
Oh who will dare to stem it,
For love of precious souls,
For the glory of our Master,
Who bare for us the shame ;
Now forward, every Christian,
In Jesu's blessed name,
Oh the bitter cry of London,
It keeps ringing in our ears,
The cry of outcast London,
Who can hear it without tears ?

READY, AYE READY.

Ready to rise at dead of night,
Ready to spring with dawn of light,

Ready, aye ready, by night or day,
Ready, aye ready, they live alway ;
Let but the warning bell be heard,
Let but the captain give the word,
" Forward, the men of the Fire Brigade,"
Never a heart that will feel afraid,
Ready to do, and ready to dare,
Ready to follow him anywhere.

Out they turn like the lightning's flash,
Off like the wind their fleet steeds dash ;
Ready for action, ready for work,
Never a man of them will shirk ;
Forward they go till a lurid light
Glitters upon their helmets bright ;
On to the rescue, onward they press,
Where duty calls them to aid distress ;
Ready to bear the hardest brunt,
Ready to rush to the hottest front.

Honour for aye to these gallant men,
Praises and thanks be given to them ;
Through countless fires they've fought their way,
Holding the fiercest of foes at bay ;
But, oh, our tears of pity fall
As sight of battered helms recall
Brave hearts now lying still in death,
Who fought the fire with their latest breath,
And reverently we read the names
Of those who perished in the flames.

MY WEB OF LIFE.

No chance has brought this ill to me,
'Tis God's sweet will, so let it be—
He seeth what I cannot see.

There is a need-be for each pain,
And He will make it one day plain
That earthly loss is heavenly gain.

Like as a piece of tapestry,
Viewed from the back, appears to be
Nought but threads tangled hopelessly ;

But in the front a picture fair
Rewards the worker for his care,
Proving his skill and patience rare.

Thou art the workman, I the frame,
Lord for the glory of Thy name
Perfect Thine image on the same.

A COLOURLESS LIFE.

Life is so long, its sky so grey,
A rugged steep, a weary way,
All things that good and gladsome be
They are the first to pass from me ;
The glory of the westering sun,
How quickly will it shade,
Yon floweret dancing in the wind,
How quickly will it fade :
Mine is a worn and wither'd heart,
In whom the spring of hope is dry,
Whose blighted life can never bloom
Beneath this dark and stormy sky.

All colourless, and calm, and cold,
The weary years have crept o'er me,
Bringing no change of weal or woe,
Nothing save drear monotony.
The moons may wax, the moons may wane,
The sea may ebb, the sea may flow,
But still and stagnant I remain,
As seasons come and seasons go.

The flats of life around me lie,
A wold swept bare by wintry blasts,
And overhead a clouded heaven,
Where heavy gloom perpetual lasts ;
A nothing to the world afar,
A nothing to the world anear,
From friends have I no good to hope,
From foes no ill have I to fear.

Oh heartless, hopeless, helpless one,
Making thy plaint so sad and drear,
There is a helper nigh at hand,
One who can heal, and soothe, and cheer ;
No sunbeam e'er has flecked thy shade,
But He can gild thine inmost heart
With light more fair than moon or sun,
Which shall illumine every part ;
Then ope the casement of thy soul,
Where dust of years hangs thick and dim,
And let thy longing eyes look out,
Who look shall lightened be by Him,
And the sweet sunshine of His love
Shall make heaven's days on earth for thee,
Though lonesome be thy lot and drear
Thy heart may yet keep jubilee.

AGNES JEFFREY

WAS born in 1848 in Peeblesshire, and spent her early days among the woods and braes of Stobo, where her father, James Thomson, and her forefathers for generations have been employed by the Montgomery family. When thirteen years of age she left school and became a domestic servant, in which capacity she remained until her marriage in 1875. Mrs Jeffrey early manifested a great love for reading, but made no attempt at composition until about her twenty-fifth year. The death of a little girl of her acquaintance was the first subject of her Muse, but she attempted nothing else until a year or two ago, when the editor of a local newspaper (Mr Barnet) made several appreciative and encouraging remarks concerning her first piece that appeared in its columns. Since then she has been a frequent contributor to the poet's corner. Her thoughts are clearly the wellings of a poetical mind and an affectionate heart. They are suggestive of home life and daily experience, and an intelligent love of the beauties of Nature.

JIMMIE JENKINS.

Jimmie Jenkins at the well,
Keekin' in to see himsel',
Caller depths, reflect him true,
Towsie pow and lofty broo;
Facy onything but clean,
Rosy lips and blue, blue e'en,
Kneeless breeks adorn his limbs—
A jacket elbo'less is Jim's.

Jimmie Jenkins rinnin' fast,
In the burn his line to cast,
Trouties winna take the bait,
Crooket preens they seem to hate;
Quick they jouk and hide themsel's,
'Neath yon bank o' heather bells,
Lang they canna hide frae him—
A famous guddiler is Jim.

Jimmie Jenkins up a tree,
Nane can speel sae weel as he,
Tho' he slips and tumbles doon,
Tears his breeks and bumps his croon,
Sune he's up the tree again,
Sage advice is all in vain,
What cares he for warnin's grim,
Nocht can dauntin' fearless Jim.

Jimmie Jenkins at his books,
Sober noo the laddie looks,
Lifts his slate and tries his sum,
Figures richt they winna come;
Dreams o' dominies and tawse,
Fit-ba's, bats, and cricket ba's,
Feels for learnin' o'ot o' trim—
Bed's the place for wearied Jim.

Jimmie Jenkin's sleepin' sound,
Angels guard his bed around,
Watch o'er him all through the night,
Leave him not when morning bright,
Calls him to his work or play,
Through his youth and manhood's day,
Till his eyes in death grow dim,
Guardian angels guide wee Jim.

BALM AND BRIAR.

I love the snow-white lily,
In its pure unsullied pride,
The deep red fragrant roses
Look charming by its side.
Their beauty and their fragrance,
Are all I could desire;
But no tender memories haunt them,
Like my favourite balm and briar.

The snow-drop in the early year,
Ere frost and snows have gone,
The primrose and the violet
Are dear to me I own.
They recall youth's happy rambles
Through woodland brake and mire,
But they are not fraught with memories
Like the humble balm and briar.

Bright orchids from the tropics
No doubt are wondrous fair,
Their strange and odorous blossoms
Perfume the hot-house air,

Blooms tinted like the rainbow,
I surely must admire,
But they entirely lack for me,
The charm of balm and briar.

A breath of fragrant sweetness
From balm or briar tree,
Awakes a thousand memories,
My early home, of thee.
I see again the rose-clad cot,
My mother and my sire,
And fill in fancy as of yore
My hands with balm and briar.

My fancy leads me further,
I step within the door,
And into sympathetic ears,
My joys and sorrows pour.
Then time and place are all forgot,
Or phantom-like retire,
Leaving only loved ones near,
With wealth of balm and briar.

HOMELY THINGS.

A homely face, with kindly eyes,
Far more most human hearts will prize
Than beauty's tints, and eyes that glance,
If haughty is that countenance.

Let they who will to beauty bow,
Praise glowing eyes and marble brow;
Give me for friend who fondly clings,
With tender love to homely things.

A homely flower, a bird, a book,
A homely word, a nod, a look;
A homely greeting by the way,
A homely, hearty, kind good-day.

A homely hearth, though poor it be,
A homely welcome there for me;
A homely voice, with love that rings,
My heart warms to such homely things.

O, who in fashion's circle gay,
Would shine in all its mock array,
And miss the sweet content that springs
For ever from all homely things?

NAE FREEN'S LIKE AULD FREEN'S.

There's nae freen's like auld freen's,
  Sae leal, sae warm, sae true,
New freen's are aften cauld freen's
  When sorrows clood the broo;
Their sympathies seem unco tame,
  Though gi'en in kindly part,
They want a wee bit touch o' hame
  To satisfy the heart.

Gi'e me the freen' wha's tears wi' mine
  Hae mingled as they fell
Upon an ink-bespattered line,
  Or word we couldna spell;
Wha ran wi' me to floo'ry braes
  An' burns I weel cud name,
Ane wha has kent me a' my days,
  And lo'ed the folk at hame.

Ah! that's the kind o' freen's I'd crave
  To close my deein' een,
To scatter floo'rs aroon my grave,
  And linger near the scene.
If aught is in my thought amiss,
  Then may it be forgiven,
But oft I think 'twill heighten bliss
  To meet such freen's in heaven.

JOHN MACAULAY,

BLACKSMITH, was born at Port-Glasgow in 1854. His parents were poor people, who had to brave the storms of life under very adverse circumstances. He informs us that he inherits his love of song from his mother, and that she first taught him to look on the face of Nature with wonder and delight. John was sent to work at the early age of ten, but by attending evening classes, and making good use of every spare moment, he, while yet a young man, acquired a fair knowledge of many important subjects. About

five years ago he was induced by a competent authority to send one of his poems to the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*. Shortly afterwards he had the pleasure of seeing his production in print; and since then he has regularly contributed to numerous newspapers and literary periodicals. Many of his poems have been thought out in the smithy, "while the iron was heating," and hastily written during the meal hour, or by the fireside after the day's toil was over. As his writings frequently show, he is fond of rural scenery, and loves the birds and flowers. Natural and unaffected good sense, reflective fancy, and warm earnest feeling, are his poetical characteristics.

DEATH.

The thunders roll, the lightnings flash,
  And loud the tempests roar;
Amongst the rocks is heard a crash—
  The barque appears no more.
A piercing shriek has rent the air—
  A sailor's latest breath
Is breathed in anguish and despair;
  'Tis death, 'tis only death.

A soldier lay upon the field,
  His heart's blood flowing fast;
His eyes are glazed, his lips are sealed,
  The end has come at last.
While savage foemen round him yell,
  He yields his latest breath;
In freedom's cause he fought and fell—
  'Tis death, 'tis only death.

A gentle boy lies low in bed,
  A weeping mother nigh;
The roses from his cheeks are fled,
  The brightness from his eye,
The clammy sweat is on his brow,
  He feebly gasps for breath—
Nor tears nor prayers can save him now—
  'Tis death, 'tis only death.

Death's dart can pierce the stoutest shield,
  Tho' dauntless heart may dare,
The feeble to his touch must yield,
  'Tis vain to cry forbear;

Humanity is ever frail,
And just as close to death
As wild flowers are in yonder vale
To winter's chilly breath.

THE DAISY'S JUST AS BONNIE.

Do not despise the rustic bard, nor at his efforts sneer,
His hamely strains are only meant the lonely heart to cheer;
Although wi' bards o' great repute the pen he canna wield,
He's still a humble daisy on the literary field.

'Tis true the bard o' great repute can wield a classic pen—
His scholarship enables him to read the hearts o' men;
But though in sic a lofty sphere the rustic canna soar,
I dinna think it fair that we his efforts should ignore.

The Muse has aft discovered him 'mang rumblin' wheels and stour,
Whaur he maun toil frae morn to nicht, a living to procure;
But though the gifted goddess strikes her soul-entrancing strings,
Adversity aft blasts his hopes and cruelly clips his wings.

At gloamin' fa' he seeks some glen to croon his humble strains,
And listen to the burnie's sang while louping ower the stanes;
He feels the breath o' heaven there, enhales the balmy breeze,
And in ilk modest, sprouting flower the hand of God he sees.

The lark sings merrily in the sky, his sang is sweet to hear;
The mavis pipes his roundelay, sae tunefu', loud, and clear;
But that's no reason lowly birds in silence should remain,
Although their carols dinna flow in sic a lofty strain.

THERE'S TIME ENOUGH TO SLUMBER IN THE GRAVE.

You'll pass through many painful scenes, as on through life you steer,
But still there's brighter days in store for those who persevere;
Then what's the use of grumbling, since tears are only vain?—
Don't be down-hearted though you fail, but up and try again.
No matter what you labour with—the sledge, the pen, or plough—
Enjoy the little comforts that your income can allow;
But do not waste in idleness the life thy Maker gave—
There's time enough to slumber when you slumber in the grave.

We've grief and care to battle with—we've hardships, toil, and woe,
But for the hopeful heart are flowers hid underneath the snow;
So do not look for your reward before your task is done,
Nor seek to claim the victory before the battle's won.

A man may sigh for honour: well, he only sighs in vain,
But he who bravely draws the sword, the prize is sure to gain.
So struggle on, and you shall yet be counted with the brave—
There's time enough to slumber when you slumber in the grave.

The brightest men this world has seen, or e'er may see again,
Were men who nobly struggled on, and struggled not in vain.
Our Shakespeare, Burns, and Goldsmith, though in their graves they lie,
Have left their marks behind them, and their names shall never die.
And more there are that I could name, who lie beneath the soil,
Who struggled hard with hand and brain, and never shrank from toil,
Through grief and care they battled on, and proof of this they gave—
There's time enough to slumber when you slumber in the grave.

This world of ours is like a bridge, by which we cross the stream,
You soon will reach the other side, for life is but a dream,
Be careful of your footing, as you cross this narrow stage—
The bridge that I refer to spans from infancy to age.
So do not stop to look behind—you can't recall the past,
But keep a sharp look-out ahead, and struggle to the last,
You'll be rewarded for your pains, for God rewards the brave—
There's time enough to slumber when you slumber in the grave.

SCOTLAND'S MINSTRELS.

Scotland, bonnie Scotland, sae weel thou mayest be prood
O' thy minstrels near as num'rous as warblers in the wood:
Fu' aft they wander through thy glens, wi' tunefu' harps unstrung,
An' deathless sangs commingling wi' the burnie's strains are sung.

When summer gaily gilds the scene, an' verdant are thy bowers,
'Tis their delight to roam at will amang the birds and flowers,
They mark the merry songsters as they skip from tree to tree,
The glistening dewdrops on the grass, the lambkins on the lea.

They climb thy rugged mountains steep, they tread thy bonnie braes,
Wi' fondest admiration on thy wide domains they gaze,
An' aften when the sun's gaun doon ayont the western hills,
The sicht inspires a thousand themes, employs a thousand quills.

When nichts are lang an' dreary, an' the hills are cled wi' snaw,
Their sangs, sae sweet an' cheery, pass the weary hours awa',
They bid the lowly sons o' toil look up wi' manly pride,
They harmonise the social cup, they cheer the ingle side.

FAME.

Fame is a thing we mortals love—
  A thing we blindly prize;
Our actions often tend to prove
  'Tis here our weakness lies.
We're ever eager to excel—
  With hand and brain we toil—
There seems to be a magic spell
  In the approving smile.

We're still inclined to place our trust
  In those who speak us fair;
We deem the friends who flatter just,
  And prize their judgment rare.
But those who dare to disapprove,
  Reluctantly we hear;
We keenly watch their every move,
  And at their counsel sneer.

We're often blindly led astray,
  And disappointed, too,
By sparkling objects far away,
  Surpassing fair to view.
Yet, like the sun's reflecting rays
  Upon a piece of glass,
The things that most attract our gaze
  May not be gold, but brass.

Our feeble minds we still harass,
  Our lives we oft expose;
We see no snake beneath the grass,
  No thorn beneath the rose.
Bright visions flit before our eyes,
  We follow through the maze,
As blindly as the moth that flies
  Around the candle's blaze.

We long to be exalted high,
  Nor will we pause or shrink,
Although the flower for which we sigh
  Blooms close to Ruin's brink.
The warning voice we madly scorn,
  That chides when danger's near;
We venture much for trifles born
  To fade and disappear.

'Tis strange, indeed, what many do
  To gain a little praise,
And be exposed a moment to
  The world's admiring gaze.

Though slender be the thread of life,
And frail the human frame,
They oft pursue, through dangers rife,
The fleeting shadow, Fame.

KEITH ROBERTSON,

JOURNALIST by profession, and author of several works of fiction, was born at Dundee, and received his early education at the High School of that busy town. He afterwards entered the Edinburgh University, where he graduated for the Free Church. He subsequently decided no longer to prosecute his studies in this direction, and London, the great magnet that attracts so many of the young and adventurous spirits, was his next sphere. There, with a few pounds in his pocket, he hoped to achieve fame and fortune. Alas, like many another ambitious youth, he found the fight a hard one, and he was reduced to his last copper when an article which he sent to the *Daily Telegraph*, on the subject of a visit he had made to the Isle of Skye, was accepted, paid for, and a request made for more of the same kind of "stuff," as the editor put it. After writing for various London periodicals, failing health compelled him to come back to Scotland. On regaining sufficient vigour, he soon obtained employment, and again contributed to a number of the leading English and Scottish literary magazines and newspapers. He subsequently returned to London, and pursued a literary career with considerable success. For some years he has resided in Glasgow, where he follows the profession of a journalist.

Amongst Mr Robertson's works of fiction may be named —"Knave of Diamonds," "The Golden Pin," "The

Braes of Gleniffer," in which the poet Tannahill figures prominently, and Maclaren's "Summer Annual" for 1886. His recent work, "The Garden of Paradise," a tale of adventure for boys, has met with considerable success. Besides these larger works, he has shown himself to be a capital writer of short stories and readings. His hard literary experience in London has done him a power of good, and to this he says he owes his present success as a writer of fiction. We must see life, and test it, before we can sketch it with truthfulness. All his tales possess the important qualification of a good novel—a well-sustained and interesting plot. They also evince considerable dramatic skill and powerful delineation of character, while the sentiments are ever natural and healthy. The same might be said of his poetry. It contains no disfigurements of fanciful exuberance, but rather possesses condensed strength, with considerable grace and simple rhythm.

"CLO'—OLD CLO'!"

Where ladies walk in gay parade,
And dudes lament the absent shade,
And cabby nods upon his seat,
And bobby trails along his beat,
There aimless walks a man "you know,"
His nose is hook'd, his heels are low,
And from one boot out peeps one toe;
And sadly cries he—"Clo'—old clo'!"

The masher starts to hear the cry,
For well he knows old Isaac's sigh—
"They arsh too dear, upon my vord,
Two bob ish all I cansh afford!"
He brings to mind the pants he sold,
And horror makes his blood run cold,
Yet soft and sad, like Jordan's flow,
There comes the cry of—"Clo'—old clo'!"

Old Isaac sees the summer suits,
The summer hats and summer boots,
And dreams of heaps of garments cast;
So thus he plies his business fast
At corner of the busy street,
And at a signal follows fleet,

Or gently turns the angry—"No!"
That meets his cry of—"Clo'—old Clo'!"

He eyes the Gentile as his prey,
E'en to his pants and coats—but stay!
He's also handy at a pinch
(Although an ell he asks for inch!);
And thus we bear his darned cheek,
And oft his friendship slily seek,
For these let Isaac onward go,
Nor heed his cry of—"Clo'—old clo'!"

WHEN CAULD THE NORLAN' BREEZES BLAW.

Oh, gang awa', thou bonnie bird,
An' o' thy liltin' lat me be;
O' blithesome simmer dinna sing
When every leaf is aff the tree;
Oh cease thy sang, or sing o' snaw,
When cauld the norlan' breezes blaw.

Oh, gang awa' thou blithesome bird,
An' o' thy liltin' lat me be;
Oh, dinna sing wi'"sky sae mirk,
An' in the moaning o' the tree;
Deid is the simmer an' awa',
An' cauld the norlan' breezes blaw.

Oh, gang awa' thou bonnie bird,
An' moan o'er deid years in their grave;
For I wad fain forget them a'
When wae is a' my heart can crave;
Then silent be till simmer braw,
When norlan' breezes dinna blaw.

MARRIAGE.

Why do the birds their music make,
When wooing in the sweet spring-time?
It isna for the music's sake,
Nor even for the sunny clime;
It is because luve is their lute—
Therefore it is they are na' mute.

Thro' days o' windy spring, when showers
Descend upon the op'ning ground,
To wake to life the sleeping flowers,
They warble forth their tuneful sound;
And thro' the lang, sweet summer days
They lilt their sangs in luve's ain praise.

And when the hoar, hard winter brings
The chilly win's, and bares the trees,
Secure in their ain luve and wings,
They fly to safter skies and breeze;
Across the ocean, far and wide,
They flee to where they may abide.

And so it is wi' truthful lives—
Thro' time o' spring, thro' summer days,
Thro' winter hoar, true men and wives
Go hand-in-hand upon their ways,
Full of that trust that aye imparts
A stronger love within their hearts.

THE FOREST STREAM.

When my heart is weary waiting
In the mirk o' sorrow deep—
When the nicht wi' mornin' mating
Slips awa' an' fa's asleep—

Then a face sae wan an' eerie,
Upward thro' the rowin' flood,
Turns an' smiles a smile sae weary,
That it stays my pulsing blood.

Summer sunshine thro' the forest,
Twenty languid months agane,
Shone sae brichtly, heart the sorest,
Curbed for ance its weary maen.

Leaves cast shadows on the river,
An' the tap o' every wave
Had a diamond, all a quiver,
Quickly hastening to its grave.

Bending o'er the streamlet, singing
Deep towards its rocky linn,
Stood a maiden waiting, longing,
Musing o'er the water's din.

Fatefu' time, tho' longed for sairly—
Now at last it draweth near—
Dreamed she on the brig aye daily
O' the ane she loved maist dear.

Oh, thou brig, sae fu' o' sorrow,
Haunted spot, where aft I stand,
Cursed to-night, an' blest to-morrow,
Silent to my wild demand.

For her lover, patient, waiting,
Shadowed o'er by dreaming trees,
Where the birds were fondly mating,
An' the wind sang symphonies.

Cam' the cryin' o' the hunting,
An' the baying o' the hounds,
An' the quarry, weary, panting,
Breaking ground in hopeless bounds.

O'er the brig, an' winged wi' terror,
Cam' the brute a' flecked wi' blood,
An' my loved ane, makin' error,
Slipped an' fell into the flood.

Carried by the cruel current
To the ragin' roarin' linn—
There I saw her face upturned,
An' my heart stood still within.

When the sun is high and yellow,
Comes the river's eerie sang,
Wi' the bugle an' the bellow,
As the huntsmen course alang.

An' I tak' them a' an' weave them
To the music o' my woe—
Bridal numbers sorrow's made them,
Where the forest waters flow.

GEORGE A. G. GIBB,

SON of the late George Gibb, whom we sketched in our Third Series, was born at Rothiemay, Aberdeenshire, in 1860. While he was a child his parents removed to Grange, near Keith, and thereafter to Longside, at which latter place he attended the Parish School until he attained the age of thirteen. At this time his father was station-agent at Longside, and the lad, unknown to him, found employment on the railway, where he remained for upwards of three

years, when the family removed to Aberdeen. In that city he was engaged as an iron dresser in a foundry, and as such he worked until the depression in trade made him look out for more steady employment. He is at present in the Aberdeen Police Force, which at one time numbered in its ranks the late William Shelley and other true poets who have been sketched in our early volumes.

Mr Gibb has contributed numerous pieces to the Aberdeen and other newspapers. His poems are thoughtful and racy, and recall those of the best efforts of his father. They are warm and kindly in sentiment, and go over a wide range of subjects, including happy character sketches, and many illustrations of phases of national manners and customs fast fading away.

WILD FLOWERS.

Welcome, little gems of nature, back to earth again ;
Little warblers sweetly greet ye with a glad refrain,
For your coming speaks of summer quiet and serene,
When the trees are blooming and the fields are draped in green.

Springing by the wayside,
Blooming on the lea,
Little gifts of Nature,
Flowering wild and free.

Now heather decks the bleak hillside, the gowans gem the lea,
And lilies spring where murm'ring rills flow gently to the sea ;
The laverock o'er his gowan bed will soar and sweetly sing,
And welcome in the summer time, and bid adieu to spring.

Growing in the wild wood,
Blooming on the plain,
Nature's tiny wildlings,
Welcome back again.

Fresh and fair wild flowers grow in the old churchyard,
By the side of cultured flow'rets mingling on the sward ;
There they bloom o'er graves, sacred spots to memory dear,
And their opening buds are watered by fond affection's tear.

Making earth more cheerful,
Gracing our abode,
Gentle little flow'rets,
Turn our hearts to God.

JIM AND I.

You ask why I love the old dog, sir,
  And call him ugly and old,
But I can assure you in truth
  To me he is dearer than gold.

He is a friend staunch and true;
  No hypocrite friendship in him;
In luck or misfortune the same—
  A wonderful friend is old Jim.

When did I meet the old dog, sir?
  Well, 'tis nigh ten years ago
Since he found me by the wayside
  Nearly frozen 'mong the snow.

Mine is a tale of disgrace, sir—
  A tale of disgrace and shame—
Of an early life misspent,
  And the wreck of an honoured name.

Cradled in luxury's lap, sir,
  And reared in affluent style
In a home of peace and love,
  'Neath fortune's happy smile;

The light of a parent's heart, sir,
  He called me his joy and pride,
And said that I looked like her
  Who was just twelve months his bride.

And then I was petted and spoiled,
  Knew naught of the world's ways,
But in ease and idleness spent
  Those glorious youthful days.

Well, the old man lived to bless me
  Till my nineteenth natal morn,
And then I was thrown on the world,
  To win its smile or its scorn.

But truly I won them both, sir,
  And dearly repent that sin,
Which left but one friend on earth,
  My good old faithful Jim.

You see I had plenty of pelf, sir,
  And friends I had by the score,
Who called me a jolly good fellow
  For keeping an open door.

You should have heard those speeches
They made when they drank my health—
They said I was just the chap, sir,
Who should be endowed with wealth.

Well, each night saw the end of carousing,
Each morrow but saw it begin ;
Thus going from bad to worse, sir,
I daily sank deeper in sin.

No thoughts of the future did haunt me,
No gloomy forebodings I knew ;
In pleasure's cup steadily drinking,
The hours all too quickly flew.

But soon came the crash ; ere I knew, sir,
I found I was ruined and lost ;
Dishonoured, a wreck, and an outcast,
I fell upon charity's cost.

Of course all my *friends* soon forsook me ;
And then, with a heart full of care,
I flew to the bottle again, sir,
To drown darkening thoughts of despair.

One cold wintry night 'mong the snow,
As staggering onwards I fell,
Had it not been for old Jim, sir,
I ne'er could have told you my tale.

For he is a friend staunch and true ;
No hypocrite friendship in him ;
In luck or misfortune the same—
A wonderful friend is old Jim.

THE AULD CREEPIE STEEL.*

It stan's in the corner a relic o' auld,
An' mony "queer stories" about it's been tauld ;
Tho' noo unco frail yet it's dear to us a',
For mony sweet mem'ries the steel does reca'.

'Tis said it was used in the lang bygane days
To haud up the guid beuk for prayer and praise,
An' in vile scenes o' carnage the creepie had been
Wi' the auld Covenanters by hillock and stream.

But great changes are brocht by auld daddy Time,
Religion's nae langer considered a crime ;

* Stule.

An' mony mair changes in life's busy reel
I may see as I sit on my auld creepie steel.

The days o' langsyne which thro' memory's e'e,
I view when I played roun' my auld granny's knee,
An' heard her relate stories, auld, quaint, and queer,
O' love, an' o' bloodshed, o' hatred, an' fear.

She spak'—oh, sae kin'—o' the Jacobite thrang,
And in praise o' her Charlie wad lilt a'sweet sang,
An' swore to his memory she'd ever be leal,
As she sat at her shank on the auld creepie steel.

While I sit on my steelie a tear dims my e'e,
As I think on the time that I nae mair shall see,
Ere the auld-farrant fouk, wi' their auld-farrant ways
Had been tint in the whirl o' our modern days.

But our forefathers he'rts were far warmer I ween,
An' nae fulsome pride 'bout our gran'dames was seen,
But new fashions start up wi' ilk turn o' the wheel,
And mak's me an auld man as I sit on my steel.

To fouk just beginning to clim' up life's brae,
I wad say be ye happy, and never coort wae,
An' that's an advice frae an auld-farrant chiel,
Wha is noo turnin' frail, like his auld creepie steel.

A WORD TO THE BACHELORS.

Ye cankert auld "bachies," whaure'er ye may be,
Wha glory in sayin' frae care ye are free,
Wha ken na the sweets nor the real joys o' life,
When wantin' a helpmate, a couthie wee wife;

Nae merry young voices are heard in your ha';
Nae willin' young han's e'er attend at your ca';
Your hearts, ye auld "bachies," maun be made o' stane,
Or hoo could ye live sae forlorn an' lane.

If your dads, ye auld "bachies," had a been like you,
In this warld, I'm thinkin', you'd numberit gey few;
An' as a' the sweet lassies aye sigh for a man,
It is wrang, ye auld billies to alter the plan.

When your een waxes dim and your heads turn bauld,
In the lang winter nichts, sae eerie an' cauld,
You'll curse the hard fate which denied you a wife
To cheer ye alang in the gloamin' o' life.

DAVID SCOTT MURRAY.

WITH the exception of a short sojourn in the Emerald Isle, the subject of our present sketch has continually resided in Selkirk, where he was born in 1853. His father was a shoemaker to trade, and as wages in those times were small, his earnings were insufficient to supply all the wants of a large family. David must therefore have received a very limited store of education in his early days, for we learn that at the age of eleven he was working in one of the tweed factories for which the district is celebrated. He, however, diligently availed himself of evening classes in winter, and embraced other opportunities that tended towards self-improvement. Inheriting from his mother a love of the beautiful in Nature—a love that was stimulated and fed by the romantic scenery and associations around his native district, which include the classic vales of Ettrick and Yarrow—it is little wonder that these fostered and awakened poetic feelings. After having been employed in various occupations, our poet became an insurance agent and house factor, and at present he is a member of the Town Council. He enjoys the esteem and respect not only of a wide circle of friends, but of the public generally, and is ever ready to take an active part in every movement having in view the welfare of the community. Under various *noms-de-plume* he frequently contributes prose and verse to the columns of the Glasgow and Border newspapers. His poems afford evidence of a pure-minded and warm-hearted poetical nature, as well as an easy flow of rhythm, and unaffected simplicity of style. They also evince keen aspirations after the good and the beautiful, and the useful enforcements of the lessons that happiness is attendant on temperance and industry.

DODDIE.

Red rosy cheeks and lauchin' een,
A chatterbox wi' vision keen,
The smartest tottles e'er was seen
Is Doddie.

A pair o' never-tirin' feet,
A tongue to match like music sweet,
Queen in the hoose and on the street
Is Doddie.

Aye wakin' lang ere break of day;
Disturbin' auntie wi' her play;
There's nane we ken sae blythe and gay
As Doddie.

We almost wish (in vain, alas!)
That changing time o'er thee would pass
And leave thee aye oor little lass,
Just Doddie.

As flowers from buds in beauty bloom,
And shed o'er all a rich perfume,
Life's weary pathway to illume,
May Doddie.

And may thy merry prattle prove
The harbinger of happy love,
A reflex from the realms above,
Dear Doddie.

THE CHILD COMFORTER.

I dreamt as I slept to-day, mother,
I heard wee Daisy sing
The sweetest heavenly lay, mother,
With voice of angelic ring.

And, O! it thrilled me so, mother,
To hear her sing again
As she did in the long ago, mother,
When we crowded round her then.

How I wished that she would stay, mother,
And sing you that pretty song
She has learned since she went away, mother,
To dwell with the happy throng.

Yet I do not wish her here, mother,
From her home beyond the sky;

For (why did you shed that tear, mother?)
We shall join her by-and-bye.

You said Jesus called her away, mother,
In his tender matchless love;
And wont He come some day, mother,
And take us home above?

And then we shall see His face, mother,
And join wee Daisy's song,
And dwell in that happy place, mother,
Amid the ransomed throng.

YARROW.

Fond memory lingers o'er that day
We spent in lovely Yarrow,
Though sunbeams smiled on flowerets gay
Somehow we felt the sorrow
That seems to fill that classic vale,
Renowned in Border story,
For weird and woeful lovers' tale,
And fatal feud and foray.

There dwelt the brave and "Bold Buccleuch,"
And daring "Outlaw Murray,"
And Mary Scott, the good and true,
The famous "Flower of Yarrow."
Newark and Dryhope Towers proclaim
In solemn silent grandeur,
They tell of friend and lover slain
Where Yarrow's streams meander.

There Afric's traveller* oft beguiled
His youth with sportive glee,
When wandering in the desert wild
He'd long for friends and thee;
The shepherd bard,† "in lonesome vale,"
Kept watch with ghost and fairy,
And "held strange converse with the gale"
By sad and lone St Mary.

The "Forest Sheriff"‡ loved to stray
And nurse his musing dream—
Perchance his choicest minstrelsy
Had birth by Yarrow's stream.
"Loved Yarrow," "garlanded with song,"
Sweet vale of silent sorrow,
Thy bonnie braes I love to roam,
And dwell in thee, dear Yarrow.

* Mungo Park. † Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. ‡ Sir Walter Scott

THE ARAB MAID.

The clash and clang of woeful war
  Had ceased with closing day,
When far off, on a distant shore,
  A wounded soldier lay.
No comrade dear to stem the tide
  That dyed his Highland plaid,
Only an Arab's lifeless form,
  And swarthy Arab maid.

She mourned her noble Arab chief,
  Cut down in youthful pride,
The dearest one on earth to her—
  His loved and plighted bride.
She kissed his ruddy nut-brown cheek,
  That soon, alas, must fade,
And smoothed his crispy, tangled hair—
  Ah, faithful Arab maid.

Then mused upon their struggle fierce,
  For other's haughty pride,
Perchance they never knew the cause
  That laid them side by side.
Far from a loving Arab home,
  And happy Highland glade,
The wounded soldier wept to see
  This loving Arab maid.

No more with trusty bow and spear
  The desert path he'll roam,
No more at setting sun he'll join
  The Arab dance and song;
And never more he'll steal away
  Beneath the palm tree's shade—
Ah, never more on earth he'll woo
  His loving Arab maid.

She dreams of "happy hunting grounds,"
  Where spirits wing their flight;
While Highland hearts are longing
  For their soldier from the fight.
The maid, uncheered by bul-bul's song,
  Deep in the forest glade
Now wanders 'mong the living dead—
  A mourning Arab maid.

ETTRICK'S LOVELY ELLEN.

There blooms a rose on Ettrick's braes,
  All other flowers excellin';

Sweet cherry lips and een like slaes
  Has Ettrick's lovely Ellen.

Ye fragrant breezes softly blaw
  Aroond her happy dwellin',
Sing sweet ye little songsters a'
  To Ettrick's lovely Ellen.

Should tempests rage o'er land and sea,
  Or angry waters swellin',
Thy presence would a solace be,
  Fair Ettrick's lovely Ellen.

Thy virtues and thy beauties rare
  Are far beyond my tellin',
The best of all the good and fair
  Is Ettrick's lovely Ellen.

What though the millionaire may be
  In wealth and fame excellin',
If wanting such a gem as thee,
  Fair Ettrick's lovely Ellen.

PETER COMRIE

WAS born in 1839 at the farm of Netherton, near Braco, Perthshire, of which farm his father was tenant for upwards of thirty years. At the age of seventeen he entered one of the branches of the City of Glasgow Bank in Glasgow, and during a number of years served that Bank as an accountant in various parts of Scotland. Failing health compelled him to go to Melbourne, where he was engaged for three years in business with a brother. He then returned to his native land, and although still far from robust, he for a time re-entered the service of the Bank, until he started business on his own account as a bookseller in Crieff, where he takes a leading part in every religious movement. Mr Comrie first began to

write verse when only fifteen years of age, and since then many of his poems have appeared in the *Signs of the Times*, the *Wigtonshire Free Press*, the *Strathearn Herald*, &c. Although they occasionally manifest inattention to the niceties of expression and rhythmical flow, they ever show a pure-souled and truly pious feeling, and afford clear evidence that they are the soul-communings of one who has at heart the religious and moral well-being of those around him.

"I AM THE WAY."

I am the way—the only way to Heaven and all its joys ;
I am the way, all nations may come to me and rejoice ;
I am the way, all ranks may come of any sex or age :
The ignorant and rude may come, the most renowned sage.

I am the door—the only door, an open door for all,
And wide enough to admit the race ruined in Adam's fall,
I am the door most safe and sure, salvation is in me—
Salvation free from guilt and sin and endless misery.

I am the truth, I speak the truth, and truth makes free indeed ;
Truth is a sharp two-edged sword—truth is a living seed,
Truth is a light, before whose beams all darkness must depart ;
Truth cheers and comforts and directs the new and cleansed heart.

I am the life, all nature, life, and spirit life I give,
And all who have eternal life in me they live and move ;
I am the life, I hold the keys—the keys of death and hell,
And all the living and the dead are under my control.

I am the true and living vine, ye are the branches fair ;
Your sap and strength, your flower and fruit are found no other where
Than in myself, in whom there dwells all fulness evermore,
To satisfy the need of all to earth's remotest shore.

I am the shepherd of the sheep, for them my life I gave,
And they are they I bring and keep, and lead and feed and save,
And they are they by waters still and pastures green shall come
To dwell with me within my fold in my eternal home.

FAITH—HOPE—LOVE.

Faith comes from God, faith leads to God, and faith makes one with Christ ;
Faith is the eye by which we see our prophet, king, and priest ;

Faith is the hand that freely takes the blessings he bestows—
Pardon and peace and purity and freedom from our foes.
Faith plants her foot upon the Rock of Ages firm and sure,
Faith leans upon the mighty arm, omnipotent, secure ;
Faith is the breastplate and the shield that panoplies the soul
Of the Christian warrior pressing onward to the goal.

Hope is the anchor of the soul, steadfast within the veil,
The helmet of salvation though subtle foes assail.
Saints do abound in hope, and they in hope do still rejoice ;
Through life they hope, in death they hope to win the immortal prize ;
The wicked have no ground of hope, their hope shall perish sure,
Its light shall be extinguished quite and die for evermore.
The Christian's hope makes not ashamed ; he hopes in Christ, in God,
And in the precious promises of His most Holy Word.

Love is God's gift, in vain we try to purchase it with gold,
Could we give all the world for love, it never will be sold.
God's love is everlasting, unfailing, changeless, free,
An ocean in immensity, a never-ending sea.
O Christ, thou art the King of love, we worship at thy feet ;
Thy deeds of love, thy words of love, thy looks of love, how sweet ;
O may thy love dwell in our hearts, and reign supremely there ;
Love is of God, and God is love, and He rules everywhere.

COMPARISONS.

As fair as a lily, as swift as a roe ;
As bright as a daisy, as white as the snow ;
As busy's a bee, as slow as a snail ;
As cunning's a fox, as right as the mail ;
As wise as a serpent, as blind as a mole,
As proud as a peacock, as black as a coal.
As swift as a post, as sure as the bank ;
As deep as the sea, as lean as a shank ;
As stiff as a poker, as supple's a wand :
As sharp as a razor, as heavy as sand.
As daft as a cuddy, as drunk as a lord ;
As foo as a piper, as sharp as a sword ;
As poor as a rat, as white as a cloot ;
As dead as a herring, as black as the soot.
As sound as a bell, as far's I can see ;
As sure as you're there, a'tween you and me.
As canny's a lamb, as sick as a dog ;
As light as a feather, as fleet as a frog ;
As rich as a Jew, as hard as a flint ;
As sour as a crab, as good as the mint.
As bright as the sun, as fair as the moon ;
As dark as a cloud, as sultry as noon ;

As clear as the day, as blue as the sky ;
As sweet as the May, as heavy's a sigh.
As true as I'm here, as trite as it's true ;
As good as his word, as bitter as rue.
As flat as a flounder, as round as your eye ;
As thin as a wafer, as sharp as a spy.
As tall as a steeple, as short as your thumb ;
As wide as the world, as Popish as Rome.
As calm as a tear, as rough as the sea ;
As sound as a top, as green as a pea.
As tough as a widdy, as ripe as a pear ;
As round as a kebbock, as steep as a stair.
As wan as a warlock, as red as a rose ;
As braid as yer bonnet, as lang as yer nose.
As highland's the hills, as weird as a witch ;
As nauseous as pills, as white as a mutch.
As grave as a judge, as wild as a shrew ;
As far's I can trudge, so I bid you adieu.

ROBERT ALLAN

WAS born in Jedburgh in 1848. His father, who was a wool merchant and farmer, gave him a good business education. On leaving school he assisted first in the wool business, and then on the farm. After he had decided on following the occupation of an agriculturist, he became tenant of a farm on the Wolfelee estate, and diligently occupied his leisure time in the study of general literature, &c. He also occasionally contributed poems to the Border newspapers, the first of these being an ode on the lamented death of his friend Thomas Davidson, the "Scottish Probationer," noticed in our Second Series of this work. His poetical productions were so well received that he was encouraged, some fifteen years ago, to publish a selection in volume form. Several of his poems have appeared in the "Parish Magazine," with illustrations by Harrison Weir. Shortly after this Mr Allan resolved to pursue a regular course of classical study,

and accordingly entered the University of Edinburgh with a view to the furtherance of his literary pursuits. He studied two sessions, and although from time to time he writes both in prose and verse, he still follows his original occupation. His poetry exhibits refined taste, and proficiency in the art of verse. While generally light and airy, with a happy turn of phrase, and in some instances full of pleasing pictures of sylvan beauty, it manifests a deep love for all the richness of the woodlands, the sounds hymned by the light voice of the brook, and the twitterings and hummings of birds and insects.

JEANIE GRAY.

The wild-bird sang sweet at the break o' the morning,
The gowan bloom'd fair i' the spring o' the year,
When, weary frae lang years o' wand'ring, returning,
I sought the blue hills to my heart aye sae dear.
I gaed to the braes, where, beside the sweet Yarrow,
I tentit my lambs thro' the blithe summer day,
And down the lang glen, wi' my heart fu' o' sorrow,
I lookit for Jeanie, my sweet Jeanie Gray.

I gaed to the spot where our young loves were plighted,
The lintie sang sweetly as ever to me,
And thro' the blue mists the bright morning beams lighted
My Jeanie's dear hame 'neath the bonny ha' tree.
I gaed to her hame—O 'twas cauld and forsaken,
The thistle had sprung where the warm hearth-stane lay,
And the robin was chirpin' as if to awaken
Frae death's early slumbers my sweet Jeanie Gray.

I speired a herd laddie I met on the mountain,
But naething o' Jeanie he tauld unto me;
I speired a sweet maiden wha sang by the fountain,
But only she wipit the tear frae her e'e.
At last I sat doon where a bird, strangely flitting,
Rang out a wild story o' dule and o' wae;
Ah! there she was lying, and there, lanely sitting,
I grat o'er the grave o' my sweet Jeanie Gray.

THE WILD BRACKEN GLEN.

When Beauty walks forth, of the Dawn newly born,
When fresh are the dews and the scents of the morn,

When each leaf in the wood and each flower on the sod
Is alive as if touch'd by the finger of God,
O then let me go
Where the streamlet sings low,
A-threading with silver the wild bracken glen.

Then shimmering and glimmering the glen dew-impearl'd
Is fair as a glimpse of a new Eden world,
And the kine softer browse by the morning-struck stream,
And life is all wrapt in a calm blessed dream
Where the primroses blow,
And the streamlet sings low,
A-threading with silver the wild bracken glen.

And when the last bleatings have died far away,
And deep starry Silence extendeth her sway,
When the great heart of Nature is throbbing for God,
And we feel deep mysterious sighings abroad,
Then, too, would I go
Where the streamlet sings low,
A-threading with silver the wild bracken glen.

For the wild bracken glen, when God's fingers unroll
That evangel of beauty, the night's starry scroll,
Is a temple of God, an all-sacred retreat,
And the toil-worn may rest at the Deity's feet
When the primroses blow,
And the streamlet sings low,
A-threading with silver the wild bracken glen.

I'M GOING HOME.

I'm going to the low-thatch'd home
Among the breezy fells,
O'er the heathery moors I'm going to roam,
And down the flowery dells.
I'm going to hear the cuckoo's note,
And music of the rills,
And all the summer sounds that float
Far up among the hills.
I'm going home! I'm going home!

I'm going to the low-thatched home,
Which "Auld Langsyne" endears,
Which memory in her pictur'd room
Has kept thro' changeful years.
I'll see the porch with roses sweet,
I'll ope the well-known door,
O'er the threshold pass with eager feet,
And be at home once more.
I'm going home! I'm going home!

Within the chamber old and brown,
Which love has sacred made,
I'll see the pictures looking down
In a flickering light and shade.
And I will walk in the garden plot,
And sit in the garden bower,
And I'll envy not the splendid lot
Of the men of wealth and power.
I'm going home ! I'm going home !

I'm going to the low-thatch'd home,
And happier there I'll be
Than were I 'neath a palace dome
Of richest masonry.
Both sad and happy in thee I'll be,
For beside the old hearthstone
Strange memories will awake in me
Of the friends and years long gone.
Yet I'm going home ! I'm going home !

O I will muse by the fire o' nights,
Until my past will seem,
As shown by memory's chequering lights,
Like "a dream within a dream."
Yea from the past a voice will come
Of strange and ghostly tone—
"Why sittest thou here in thine old home
When all thy friends are gone?"
Yet I'm going home ! I'm going home !

I'm going to the low-thatch'd home,
My home in vanished years,
Yet much I fear, my fair hill-home,
I'll look on thee thro' tears.
For the years may go, and the years may come,
But O I'll never see
Her who within the low thatch'd home
Shone angel-like for me.
Yet I'm going home ! I'm going home !

TO THE SKYLARK.

O minstrel sweet, that lead'st the choir
Of the gay vernal morning,
Now while thou wak'st thy muirland lyre
Thou seraph-like seem'st burning ;
For still thou art uprising,
The solitude surprising
With the wild joyance of thy love-taught lay ;
O herald of spring gladness,
Thou speak'st of ended sadness
Hymning the birth of the new golden day.

Now thou dost take with minstrel grace
The high aerial station ;
Sweet bird, well dost thou fill thy place
Within God's fair creation ;
Now like a glowing angel
Thou preachest thine evangel,
Scattering abroad thine antidote for pain.
Ne'er heard I such discourser,
Such eloquent enforcer
Of the glad truth that a good God doth reign.

Thanks, thanks, my preacher musical,
Thy glorious song is ended ;
And as a kite from heaven would fall,
Even so hast thou descended ;
Thou and thy mate together,
Among the blooming heather,
Will now one precious hour of rapture spend.
O minstrel sweet and lowly,
'Tis only spirits holy
That dwell so low, so sing, and so ascend.

CHARLES WILL,

PRESENTLY a policeman in Edinburgh, and formerly attendant in the Haddington District Asylum, "ministering to the mind diseased," was born at Methlic, Aberdeenshire, in 1861. At the age of twelve years he was engaged as a farm servant, and while so employed his leisure hours were devoted to reading whatever books came within his reach. After a time he returned home, and served an apprenticeship under his father to the trade of a shoemaker. The beauties of his native glen, with its woods and streams, fostered within him the desire to write verse, the result being that for several years he has contributed largely to the "poet's corner" of the *Aberdeen Free Press*, *Dundee Weekly News*, and *Haddingtonshire Advertiser*. He writes pleasantly and melodiously, and a vein of quiet humour runs through many of his songs.

THE BLACKBIRD'S LAMENT.

How fair were the flo'eries that bloomed on the meadow,
How sweet was the blossom that draped the sloe,
When summer, bright summer, with its sunshine and shadow,
Smiled sweetly on upland and valley below.

But summer, sweet summer, alas! has departed,
And autumn frowns darkly on woodland and plain;
And sadly I sing in my bower broken-hearted,
And sorrow, deep sorrow, is blent in the strain.

The burnie that lo'ed in the summer to sally
And chatter delighted adoon the green shaw,
Noo grumbles and tumbles and creeps to the valley—
It has lost its sweet tinkle since summer's awa.

The laddie that cam' wi' his lassie sae bloomin',
To tell the auld story on Tyneside sae fair;
Their sweet smilin' faces I miss in the gloamin';
They've ta'en their farewell, and I see them nae mair.

But why need I sorrow though summer is ended,
And why need I grieve what the future may be?
For O, there is One who has loved and defended
Puir birdies frae hardships, as lowly as me.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

In happy days, long, long ago,
When we were young and free,
Dost thou remember, oh, my love,
The dear old aspen tree
That grew beside a little brook
In Sessnie's flow'ry dell,
'Neath which we met, and whisper'd oft
The old, old story, Nell?

Thy cheeks were red as roses then,
And, darling, thou wert fair;
Thy brow so smooth had not a trace
Nor furrow made by care.
But still as years roll on and on,
'Mid tears our thoughts will dwell
Around the trees where first we spoke
The old, old story, Nell.

Dost thou remember, darling, how
We loved to linger there,
When the moon lit up the valley,
And made the scene so fair—

When the nightbird's song so mournful
Blent with the owlet's wail?
Then we listen'd, sigh'd, and whispered
The old, old story, Nell.

Still, darling, though we're aged now,
And bent with years and care,
We've never rued the happy night
That Hymen bless'd us there,
Beneath the dear old aspen tree
In Sessnie's flow'ry dell,
Where first we met and loved to speak
The old, old story, Nell.

THE POPLAR TREE.

In the twilight, in the twilight
Of the fading summer's day,
O'er the flow'r-bespangled meadow,
Sadly now I take my way.
Where the sparkling, crystal streamlet
Murmurs on its way with glee,
Lonely, sadly there I wander,
Thinking, Willie, love, of thee.
And I linger, linger, linger,
Thinking, Willie, love, of thee;
By the streamlet, tinkling, tinkling,
Underneath the poplar tree.

In the twilight, in the twilight,
Mem'ry wafts me back amain,
Blissful, blissful days departed,
And my Willie, love, again.
Once more young I feel, and happy,
Once more freed of miser care,
Stroll I down the sylvan pathway,
Plucking flow'rs the purest there.
And I linger, linger, linger,
Thinking, Willie, love, of thee,
By the streamlet, tinkling, tinkling,
Underneath the poplar tree.

In the twilight, in the twilight,
Stand I now where willows quiver,
In the lonely village graveyard,
By the bonnie Ythan river.
And the tears come stealing, stealing,
Softly, sadly, from mine eye;
By thy grave I nurse a sorrow
I knew not in days gone by.

When I linger'd, linger'd, linger'd
In the twilight, love, with thee,
By the streamlet, tinkling, tinkling,
Underneath the poplar tree.

GEORGE WEBSTER,

ONE of Scotland's fine old race of parochial teachers, and a contributor of biographical papers and essays to the pages of "Hogg's Instructor" and "Chambers' Journal," was born in the parish of Ceres, Fifeshire, in 1823. He began his career as a teacher at Pitsligo parish school in 1845, subsequently filling similar situations at Hawick and Selkirk, until his ultimate settlement at Westbarns, near Dunbar. Mr. Webster studied for some time at the University of Edinburgh, where he distinguished himself, and while yet in his youth gave evidence of the possession of literary and poetic talents of a high order, by writing a "Lay" entitled "Quintus Fabius." Having studied German literature, he also wrote several excellent translations of German ballads and songs.

In early life he contributed a number of sketches, essays, and poems to the journals already mentioned, and although most of his articles, biographical papers, and poetical productions appeared in the *Scotsman*, the columns of other magazines and newspapers were also enriched by the fruits of his pen. His *nom-de-plume*, "Linton Cuff," ("L. C."), became widely identified with lyrical pieces displaying a delicate and cultured fancy, graceful and melodious numbers, genial humour, and that full and many-sided sympathy and warm feeling with the beautiful in Nature and the good and true in humanity which makes the genuine poet.

Mr Webster died at the school-house of Westbarns in 1880. In a newspaper sketch of his career that appeared at the time of his death, and to which we are indebted for some of the details here given, it is stated that he did much good and honest practical educational work in his day, and gained the affection and esteem of all with whom he came in contact. He discharged with singular fidelity and success the laborious duties of his profession, and by the prelections of his leisure moments ministered largely to the happiness and enjoyment of a wide circle of readers. His pen and his services were ever ready where a good and kindly turn could be done, and the most remote tendency to hurt or wound either by speech or written word was as foreign to his spirit as it was practically absent from his writings. The subject of our sketch often regretted that he had so little time to devote to the study of poetry. He has, however, fairly earned for his name an honourable place among the minor poets of Scotland. His numerous poems, sketches, and lectures have not as yet been issued in a collected form, although we trust at no distant date to hear of his family, in accordance with the wishes of many friends and admirers, undertaking the task of editing a selection from his literary productions.

MARY.

"I have a passion for the name of Mary."—Byron.

Mary! who has not paused and breathed that name,
When memory from her stores hath brought the past?
A sweeter one, or one more dear to fame,
Was never breathed in lover's vows, or cast
In glowing numbers; true it is but tame,
But yet these magic syllables will last,
When sweet Arcadian names are sunk in night,
And cold oblivion veils them from our sight.

Erratic Burns! thy Mary from thy soul,
By "death's untimely frost," was wrenched too soon;
Thy sweeter strains—strains that will reach the goal
Of immortality—proclaim her bloom,

Her peerless form ; earth has not claimed the whole
Of thy soul's idol ; as the sun at noon
Her name will shine on thy impassioned page,
In golden letters bright, from age to age.

Ayr's gurgling stream will, while it seeks the sea,
Be witness of her constancy and love,
And in soft murmurs it will tell of thee
To him who treads its banks, the "hallowed grove '—
The parting spot, where visions ne'er to be
Illumed the future—each and all will prove
The sacred flame that fired thy bosom, strong,
Immortal, as thy wild and burning song.

Ascetic Byron ! thou, who threwest down
The gauntlet of defiance to the world,
Didst weep, and weep too at thy Mary's frown :
And yet not thine ; thy young affections hurled
Back on thyself. Oh ! had she placed the crown
Of mutual love upon thy head, unfurl'd
The standard of loose love might have remained,
And thy great name with vice have been unstained.

But yet, while time shall roll, the "beings bright"
That stood upon the hill, will, hand in hand,
Descend to latest ages ; and that night
They stood together, whispering accents bland,
Within the "antique oratory"—a sight
So well portrayed, when on a foreign strand,*
By thee, the secrets of thy heart has shown,
And links the name of Mary with thy own.

Cowper ! thy Mary with her "needles bright,"
"A shining store," a treasure was to thee ;
Unhappy wert thou, if from out thy sight
Her duty called her ; † pleasant sight to see
Thee and thy Mary, in the long dark night
Of winter, by the fireside chatting free ;—
Oh ! blessed abode of innocence and ease,
Where all thy Mary did was sure to please.

Pope ! though deformed, thou hadst thy Mary too,
Thy meagre limbs, they measur'd not thy soul ;
Fame links thy name with that of Montague—
They sound in unison from pole to pole.

* In the "Dream," composed at Diodati, in July, 1816, and which, he himself says, cost him many a tear in writing.

† See Cowper's "Ode to Mary."

Thy Sappho's ‡ Ode proclaimed her passion true,
And strong as true ; love revelled in the whole
Of her fair bosom : Pope ! excelled by few
Has been thy charming Mary Montague.

What Scotsman weeps not at the many woes
Of Mary Stuart, Scotia's hapless queen?
What Catholic devotee does not disclose
His inmost soul, what is and what has been,
To "Mary Mother?" sweet, at evening's close,
The vesper bell that calls him to the scene
Of faith and love, where, all his sins forgiven,
He calms his troubled soul with hopes of heaven.

And thou, my Mary, with thy locks of brown,
And eyes of jet bright sparkling with thy love,
Hast been, and art to me, a radiant crown—
A priceless gem—a pearl far above
Earth's choicest treasures. Burning hopes have flown,
And youth's gay dreams now sad and gloomy prove,
All things have changed, but thou art still the same—
The love that warms thy breast, an endless flame.

MY AULD GRANNY MARY.

Some poets I've read—peace be to their sauls !
Sang o' naething but ladies, an' lords in braw halls ;
Sae just for a moment, the subject to vary,
I'll gi'e ye a sketch o' my auld granny Mary.
Frae the Elie she cam', or some place there aboot,
But the kin o' my granny I ne'er could find oot ;
As the matter's disputed, we'll best lat it be,
Nor bother oorsel's wi' a lang pedigree.

In a twa-storey hoose, at the Cross on the richt,
My auld granny lived when I first saw the licht ;
In her apron she row'd me, an' happit me weel,
An said I would yet be a braw strappin' chiel.
Tho' noo thirty summers an' winters fu' cauld
Hae passed ewer my head sin' my fortune she tauld ;—
Nae spaewife was she ; but, I canna forget
Her words, that "they a' would be proud o' me yet."

Tho' her years, when I kent her, were mair than fourscore,
An' the rough road o' life she had lang travelled o'er ;
On the croon o' the causey her head she would carry
As hie as the grandest, my auld granny Mary.
Her sow-backet mutch, aye as white as the snaw,
Wi' its strap o' black ribbon fu' tidy an' braw,
Was the brag o' the parish for mony a day,
For few had mair pride in her ain hamely way,

‡ The name given by Pope to Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

Langsyne, when a loon, I mind weel as yestreen,
My auld granny Mary, I thocht my best freen,
For she aye took my pairt—richt or wrang I micht be,
It was nathing to her, but 'twas something to me.
When Davie, my brither, an' I would cast oot,
An' naething would please but to hae lick aboot;
On the cause o' oor quarrels we ne'er could agree,
For my granny blamed him, an' my mither blamed me.

Divinity, physic, wi' a smatterin' o' law,
She had at her finger-ends ready for a';
In truth, I aye wondered that sae muckle knowledge
Could shine on the ootside the wa's o' a college.
Was ony ane ailin', nae matter wi' what,
Advice an' gude herbs frae my granny they gat;
In truth, as a proof that she didna want skill,
The neebors a' said that her cures did nae ill!

At births, when the howdie put on a lang face,
And vowed that she couldna do mair in the case,
My granny was sent for,—I ne'er kent it vary,—
An' a' thing made richt by my auld granny Mary.
At weddin's an' christenin's the room was but spare,
An' little fun gettin' gin she wasna there;
E'en the minister's sel', tho' o' smiles unco chary,
Would laugh at the jokes o' my auld granny Mary.

I gaed to the schule, whaur in learnin' I grew,
An' my granny, puir body! was glad, ye may trow,
When aften fu' glibly the dominie would tell
That nane in the schule could compete wi' mysel'.
Gude books she had mony, an' aften would gi'e
A braw gilted ane as a present to me;
For, when ither youngsters were oot at their play,
I sat by my granny, and read ilka day.

Folk said that my granny had been a stout wife,
An' ne'er had a dwam in the course o' her life;
But disease cam' at last, an' tho' strong she had been,
My granny she dee'd, an' I lost a guid freen'.
Sair missed was my granny by mony ane mae,
For mony gude deeds she had dune in her day;
But lang in the parish her memory will tarry,
For few are in't noo like my auld granny Mary.

"LET THE LIGHT ENTER:" THE LAST WORDS OF GOETHE.

Let the light enter! it is dark,
We cannot see through mist and spray
To steer aright our feeble bark,
To guide it on its heavenward way.

The raging, stormy sea of life
Is thick with murky clouds and gloom;
It needs a strong arm for the strife,
A heart that looks beyond the tomb.

Let the light enter! full of fear,
We grope along this weary world,
And all things far and all things near
Seem into one wild chaos hurled.
The ways of Providence to man
Are dark and dim to our weak eyes;
In vain frail mortals try to scan
The actions of Eternities.*

Let the light enter! weak and worn,
We toil and moil from day to day,
While, one by one, our hopes forlorn,
With ruthless hands, are snatched away.
"Increase our faith!" we wildly cry,
For dire and keen death's shafts appear;
The fair-haired child, the strong man lie
Together on the lowly bier.

Let the light enter! want and woe,
Sorrow and sin are at our doors,
While pomp and pride and luxury go,
Unmindful of the festering sores.
From out the city's darksome lanes,
With giant stride, vice stalks abroad,
While Commerce coolly counts his gains,
And Prudence trudges on his road.

Let the light enter! soon or late
A day of reckoning must come—
'Tis written in the book of Fate,
Whose deeds shall strike the boldest dumb.
Thousands of souls for vengeance call;
Thousands are still in darkest night;
'Tis yours, brave hearts, to break their thrall—
Open the shutters! let in light!

Let the light enter! more and more
We need the guiding lamp of Heaven,
To light our feet from shore to shore,
As o'er life's ocean we are driven.
Amid the storm, amid the calm,
Amid the gloom in sunshine bright,
Pervading all—a soothing balm,
We need the influence of that Light.

* Vide Hugh Miller's Testimony of the Rocks.

Let the light enter ! ay, 'tis time
To cheer the weary in their way ;
Too long enslaved to vice and crime,
In sin and shame, has earth grown grey.
Ages on ages rolling past
Proclaim the speed of Time's far flight,
Loudly they cry from first to last,
"We cannot see ! Let in the Light !"

THE LASSIE IN THE MIST.

There is mist on the lea,
There is mist on the sea,
As I look to the north the tear dims my e'e ;
But the Bass grim and gray,
An' the bonnie Isle o' May,
Through the mist an' the spray I canna, canna see.

There is mist on the moor,
There is mist on the shore,
An' I canna get a glimpse o' my ain faither's door ;
Though steiket in my face,
When I brocht him to disgrace,
I canna leave the place till I see it once more.

The weary feet are fain
To gang the gate again
They liket aye sae weel in the days langsyne ;
To spiel the hill sae hie,
To see the trystin' tree,
An' the shielin' on the hillside I thocht would once be mine.

At ilka fit I gae
As I warsle up the brae,
The bitter, bitin' blast blaws louder in my face ;
But the feet are unco fain
To gang the gate again—
To wander once more through ilka weel-kent place.

The nicht is gatherin' fast,
Still wilder blaws the blast
Through the bonnie woods o' Belton awa to the wast ;
There's nae hand to lead me,
There's nae heart to heed me,
I gang like a ghaist through the scenes o' the past.

The battered broken form
Is battlin' wi' the storm,

The bleedin' broken heart is fain to be at rest;
The mist is thickenin' still,
But the mist upon the hill
Is never half sae dark as the mist within my breast,

The tear dims my e'e
As I look to heaven hie,
An' sigh to be free frae want an' frae wae;
But I dinna see the road,
For atween me an' my God
A darkness has come doon like the mist on the brae.

The nicht is wearin' past,
The mist is fleein' fast,
The heaven is bricht at last to the closin' e'e;
In the hollow o' the hill
The weary feet are still,
An' the weary heart is hame to its ain countrie.

MARY JANE POTTER,

THE writer of the following verses, although born at York in 1833, was brought with her parents to Montrose when she was about three years of age, and has resided there ever since. From her earliest recollection she was very fond of reading. There was an illustrated copy of Shakespeare amongst her father's books that she frequently got hold of, and, getting into a quiet corner, she would pore over it for hours at a time. Her admiration of Shakespeare remains as great as ever—indeed, so strong is her love for his writings that, as she tells us, she "has fairly worn out a copy." In 1862 Miss Potter's eldest sister died, and left four young children to her care. Their father, who was a ship carpenter, was killed at Calcutta soon after, so that her time was fully occupied until they went out into the world. Nevertheless, she occasionally wrote in the columns of the news-

papers, and of late years she has been a very frequent contributor. Her poems show much appreciation and an intelligent love of the beauties of Nature, and they ever manifest religious fervour as well as refinement and grace. Hers is the calm wisdom and unaffected piety and tenderness of one who can "rejoice with those that do rejoice, and weep with those that weep." In her own language—"If a wise Providence has kept from me many things I would have liked, He has given me many blessings, among which is a 'cheerful heart that tastes His gifts with joy.'"

MY COMPANIE.

You ask if I am lonely here,
  An' think I'll wearied be;
I never can be lonely, for
  I keep good companie.

I've "gentle Will" and "glorious John,"
  An' Robbie too, so slee;
Then how can I be wearied when
  I hae sic companie?

An' Wattie wi' his magic wand
  Conjures fair scenes for me;
Spell-bound I list their wondrous tales
  Wi' a' their glamourie.

An' backward rolls the tide of time
  As bygone days I see—
Oh, better ilka day I live,
  I like their companie!

When Night ascends "her ebon throne,"
  An' closes Nature's e'e,
In my wee room I entertain
  My goodly companie.

An' some are English, some are Scotch,
  An' some frae yont the sea;
My dear-loved friends! I ne'er could wish
  For better companie.

When trouble comes across my path—
  For nane frae cares are free—

I've prophets, sages, kings, and bards
Waiting to comfort me,

An' tell me o' that brighter time
When sorrow shall not be;
They cheer me on my journey now,
My goodly companie.

When sad at heart, to them I turn,
Oft in perplexity;
Isaiah soothes in low, sweet strains,
And David sings to me.

Apostles, martyrs cheer my soul
With songs of victory;
An' life is robbed of all its ills,
When I've this companie.

And best of all, His words fall soft—
His words "Come unto me,
Lay all thy weary burdens down—
I've purchased rest for thee."

LINES TO AN EARLY SNOWDROP.

Beauteous harbinger of spring!
Sweet the message thou dost bring,
Bursting from thy bed of clay
Telling winter's passed away,
Heralding fair Flora's train
Which shall visit the earth again;
Sweet the message thou dost bring,
Beauteous harbinger of spring!

And we read the promise true
When thy snowy leaves we view,
Thou dost plume Faith's drooping wing,
Beauteous harbinger of spring!
Thou hast burst from out the clod
At the bidding of our God,
And I see His pencilling
On thy leaves, fair bud of spring!

Mortal could not mould thy form,
Keep thee safe through winter's storm,
Bid thee through the tempest live
And thy hues so beauteous give,
Shape thy leaves and pensile stem,
Fairest, purest, floral gem,
Sweet the lessons thou dost bring,
Lovely harbinger of spring!

Let the snowdrop's teaching be
God's own message sent to thee,
Thou, like it, must burst the clay
And emerge to realms of day,
Thou shalt shine in glory bright
And thy robes be pure and white,
Thou shalt rise on radiant wing
Where doth reign perpetual spring !

Beauteous harbinger of spring,
Sweet the message thou dost bring,
Pledge of summer blossoms fair
Proof of God's unceasing care.
Strengthening our feeble faith,
We, like thee, shalt rise through death,
Sweet the comfort thou dost bring,
Lovely harbinger of spring !

THEY LEFT THE BAY AT MIDNIGHT.

They left the bay at midnight
To earn the children's bread,
Ere morning broke, by a hidden rock,
They slept with Ocean's dead.

They left the bay at midnight,
Strong men in all their prime,
With no thought of fear, though death was so near
And they were done with Time.

They left their homes at sunset,
Where sweet the children slept;
When the morning broke—ah, that fatal stroke !
A score of orphans wept !

Oh ! ye whose lives are fended
By all that wealth can give ;
Oh ! list to the moans, of these helpless ones,
And think *how* they are to live.

God fill your hearts with pity
When ye hear the widows' cry ;
Give gladly your aid, for the children's bread
Is scant when the fathers die.

Then give of your abundance
To help in this time of need ;
There's the promised word—who lends to the Lord
Shall be recompensed indeed.

And ye who have felt the pinching
Of Poverty's iron touch,
Oh, come with your mite! you know in God's sight
It will be accounted much!

Oh! try to relieve the anguish
Caused by the death of those
Who sailed from the bay, at the close of day,
And died ere the sun arose.

REBECCA NAPIER AND JESSIE H. SIMPSON.

THE late Mrs Jane C. Simpson, the talented authoress of the well-known hymn, "Go When the Morning Shineth," entered into her rest on the 17th day of June, 1886. It was in "the Granite City" that she spent her last years, which were cheered and enlivened by the society of her grandchildren. Nellfield Cemetery was one of her favourite resorts; and there she now sleeps "until the day break." A short sketch of her life and literary labours appeared in the Eighth Series of this work, but we might state here that since the publication of her last volume, "Linda, and other Poems," Mrs Simpson composed several very beautiful, tender, and thoughtful pieces. During her later years she was a constant contributor to the pages of the *Christian Leader*; and of the poetical fruit of her old age it may justly be said that it constituted the most exquisite addition that has been made by any writer to the sacred verse of Scotland. There was strength as well as ethereal delicacy in all the work that proceeded from this gifted lady's pen, and at the time of her death it was stated in one of the numerous memorial sketches that "no other woman born on Scottish soil, with the single exception of Joanna Baillie, has written so great

an amount of sacred poetry of enduring value." The following lines were amongst the last she wrote :—

AFTER DEATH.

When I am dead a few kind friends will wear
A graver aspect for a little space,
Thinking that one who long had borne a share
In household joys and griefs hath no more place.

And when in reading in the Book the light
On some sweet words that tell though sins should be
Of deepest crimson, all shall be made white—
Let the hope rise it may be thus with me.

Once when the Master dwelt on earth there came
A woman, trembling 'mid her guilty fears,
Who, fain to ease the anguish of her shame,
In silence kissed His feet and washed with tears.

And he forgave her ! and for love so true
Sent a great peace enfolding heart and head ;
Even so perchance the thought, she loved Him too,
May cheer the few will miss me when I'm dead.

Out of her family of five sons and three daughters, only two survive—Mrs Napier and Miss Jessie H. Simpson, who reside in Aberdeen, and who have inherited, in no small degree, the poetical talents for which their respected parent was so widely known. The poetry of her daughters contain the same characteristics, though to a lesser extent, that were so prominent in the writings of their mother—warm religious feeling, calm utterances full of faith and consolation, finding emblems and teachings in all outward things. The first three pieces we quote are by Miss Simpson, while the remaining three are the productions of Mrs Napier.

BETTER AWAY.

Better away—Oh, sainted Mother mine—
From this poor world with all its fret and strife ;
Better away where day knows no decline,
And holier feelings find eternal life—
Better away.

Better away—for souls attuned like thine—
To all the true, the beautiful, the best,
Can only reach their zenith when they shine
In Heavenly places—there secure they rest—
Better away.

Better away—on earth God's children ever
Creep through the world with longings cramped and crushed,
There perfect peace flows like a mighty river,
The music of its waters ne'er is hushed—
Better away.

Better away—the Silent Land hath spoken
Unto our souls with no uncertain sound,
And thy sweet spirit is to us the token
Of lasting bliss thou now in Christ hast found—
Better away.

Better away—for here the clouds and vapours
Obscure our view of all that's good or great;
Better away—where high the star-lit tapers
Point out the path beyond the golden gate—
Better away.

Better away to dwell in light resplendent,
To wear the morning star upon thy brow;
Better away—where God's own love transcendent
Thrills with a rapture through thy being now—
Better away.

Better away—where white-robed saints in glory
Adoring cast their crowns before His feet,
While the bright Seraphim chant forth the story:
The Great Redemption now is all complete—
Better away.

Better away—though through a mist of weeping
We fain would catch thy spirit's upward flight;
Better away—for thine's the glorious reaping,
Thy sheaves are garnered—"Faith is lost in sight"—
Better away.

"AFTER LIFE'S FITFUL FEVER."

"After life's fitful fever" cometh sleep,
Rest to the tired limbs and eager brain,
Slumber ineffable the senses steep
With no rude wakening to bring back life's pain.

"After life's fitful fever" cometh peace,
That cloud-like wraps the soul in calmest splendour,

For now the Christian findeth sweet release,
Who gave the soul to God in full surrender.

"After life's fitful fever" comes reward,
The priceless gift He to His own hath given,
To dwell for ever with the blessed Lord,
Joint heirs with Christ, and chosen sons of Heaven.

"THE FIELD IS THE WORLD."

The world is bountiful, and God is good,
The whole creation magnifies His name—
Earth, air, sea, sky, hills, vale, and waving wood,
And gorgeous sunsets make the clouds aflame.

The world is beautiful, but man is blind,
Grubbing and striving to increase his store
Of earthly riches, leaving far behind
His choicest wealth, even life for evermore.

The world is luminous, but faith is dim—
We lack the power to realise our treasure;
Care clips our wings, we cannot soar to Him
Who crowns our lot with blessings above measure.

The world is merciful—the Saviour came
Healing the sick, and making work sublime;
The dead were raised, feet gave he to the lame,
And noblest love provided for all time.

The world is dignified—its very air,
The food we eat, the raiment we put on,
All the good gifts that we in common share,
Alike were used by Him—God's only son.

The world is consecrate to all that's holy,
For here the incarnate Christ, the mighty Lord,
In meek obedience, with submission lowly,
Died on the cross to yield us rich reward.

The world is reverent—in that awful hour,
When human heart and flesh do faint and fail,
Kind Nature hid her face, revealed her power,
Withdrew the sun, shivered the temple's veil.

The world is righteous—even here below,
If we her choicest works would wisely scan,
They all point upward, seasons come and go—
The earth was made at first for perfect man.

The world's our battlefield—oh may we fight
For faith, hope, charity, and all that's true ;
Then will recording angels hail the sight,
And God Himself our strength will still renew.

"HE BRINGETH THEM INTO THEIR DESIRED HAVEN."

The soul hath summers, when, all steeped in bliss,
Like some calm mountain 'neath a cloudless sky,
It basks beneath the Holy Spirit's kiss,
And lives to God and good more perfectly.

And the green earth seems very far away,
And melts in distance 'neath the winged feet,
Far more of spirit, and far less of clay,
We reach a realm more ample and complete.

We drink awhile the air divinely pure
The pilgrims tasted on the storied height,
And trusting in the love so large, so sure,
Pains lost in happiness, and faith in sight.

From Beulah's height we stedfast gaze away
To where the city lies in golden sheen ;
We almost catch the harper's heavenly lay,
We almost see his flock in pastures green.

A little while, and turning slowly back
To this old world we fitly call a school
Of common life, we tread the daily track,
Where narrower things are end, and aim, and rule.

And yet we feel that in our inmost heart
We've stored a little honey for the time
Of earthly winter, and that sweeter part
Makes our poor lives more earnest and sublime.

We leave the upland pastures of His grace,
To tread the valley with the rougher road,
But from the lingering radiance in our face
Men see that we have been and talked with God.

IN MEMORIAM.

THE LATE MRS JANE C. SIMPSON.

"She hath gone where the morning shineth,"
I said as I took my place
Beside her bed, where she lay in flowers,
"The dawn is on her face."

She is passing away to serener air ;
It hovers about her brow ;
It seems to blow through the quiet room,
So full of pain till now.

It is not sleep or a pale forgetting ;
It is Heaven's awakening psalm ;
There's the light of love and of tender hope
In her glance so soft and calm.

I cannot follow the spirit's track
Through eyes all woebegone ;
I only know that her trusting faith
Grew stronger as years went on.

The harp she tuned on earth is dumb
To joy or grief or fret ;
But far away beyond my ken
I believe she is singing yet !

So I leave the room with quiet step ;
Farewell for a little space ;
I know the morning shines for her,
Its dawn is on her face.

FRIENDS.

When we are young we call them friends
Who make the hours go fast and gay,
Who join our games, who share our smiles,
Or pleasant dance, or roundelay.

When we are young we press soft hands,
And blow light kisses from their tips ;
And glib expressions of our love
Flow gaily from our thoughtless lips.

When we are old we call them friends
Who stand the earnest glance of years,
Whose thoughts are high, whose truth is sure,
Whose love is large in smiles and tears.

Ah me ! how few can bear the test
That time and poverty can bring,
Who only take us as we are,
And love us spite of everything ;

Who watch us with their love-lit eyes,
And clasp us in a soul embrace,
To which our very life goes out,
As to a solemn holy place.

Such friends make wealth of common life,
Though few are left with ripening years,
We take their love, and give back ours
In silent peace or blessed tears.

ROBERT GAIRNS.

AUTHOR of a little volume of "Rustic Rhymes" that has reached a third edition, was born at New London, St Martin's, Perthshire, in 1804. During his long life he has always resided in the house in which he first saw the light. He learned the trade of a hand-loom weaver, but when that occupation decayed, he became a stone dyker and wood cutter. He further informs us that for many years during harvest he "looked after shearers with the hank hook, until reaping machines cut them and me out. Although I don't like to speak about myself, I may inform you that the house in which I live has been four times thatched and three times wooded. In 1884 it was wooded and thatched with reeds, and pointed all round. I have six Scotch acres, and my rent is £8. My grandfather had forty acres for £5, and now it is more than £40." Mr Gairns occasionally writes with considerable force, and his Muse is always natural and homely. His productions are sometimes recited at rural gatherings, and are received with much favour. He has for many years been a total abstainer, and though now very frail, he still tries, by word and deed, to commend its principles to all around him. He considers himself "nae poet, nor a poet's son."

I sometimes try a verse for fun,
To pass the time:
If little good, nae harm is done
By my rough rhyme.

I'm just a canny simple Scot,
Wi' bonnet blue and fustian coat,
Rejoicing round the tatie pot,
Wi' Doddie's drappie ;
Though in our ain clay-biggit cot,
We're unco happy.

There's five at hame o's a' thegither—
The bairnies, puir things, want their mither—
Our wee bit land amang the heather
Is far frae fine ;
But while the twa ends meet thegither,
We'll no repine.

THE FARMER'S A'E DOCHTER.

There lives a young lassie no far frae St Martin,
She's baith young an' bonny, gude-natured, an' braw ;
She says she is ready to part wi' her daddy,
If ony young man wad but tak' her awa.

She's got plenty o' a' kind o' learnin' that's usefu'—
For shapin' an' shewin' nane can beat her ava ;
She does what she's bidden—can work i' the midden—
Milk the kye—and, if need be, can muck them an' a'.

As for her tocher,—a faither's ae dochter,
What she'll get wi' her it winna be sma' ;
Twa horse an' three kye, an' a great lade o' flittin',
An' things that wad ding me to mention them a'.

But nane need gae near her that's counted a broker,
Wha courts a' the lasses, an' then slinks awa—
Just some decent chield that is kind to his mither,
And then a' the courtin' she'll need will be sma'.

Tho' she get but a weaver, she'll do her endeavour
A' his pirns to fill, though the yarn be sma' ;
Let him tramp the treddle, an' she'll rock the cradle,
An' wash a' the dishes an' hippens an' a'.

She's willin' to tak' him, a farmer to mak' him,
Nae doubt he'd soon learn baith to big an' to saw ;
Then fareweel to treddles, to shuttles, an' heddles—
They are things that a farmer's nae use for ava.

AULD COLLIE.

O, Jenny, lass, ye're fairly wrang—
Ye've gar'd the rhymer mak' a sang ;
I fear that ye will rue, ere lang,
That ye hae slichted Collie.

That nicht he cam' your hand to seek,
Ye micht hae stayed wi' him to speak.
What, tho' he tried to kiss your cheek,
Ye needna frowned on Collie.

O, was't his looks, or was't his age,
That put you into sic a rage,
An' gar'd ye loup your faither's hedge,
To be awa frae Collie?

Had he gane hame an' tried to dee,
Ye wad the creatur' gane to see;
Your mou' ye'd maybe let him pree,
Which wad revived auld Collie.

But he is aff to Tibbie Brown,
An' promised her a braw new goun,
Likewise a bed as saft as doun,
Gin' she wad match wi' Collie.

She's blankets, sheets, an' wabs o' claith—
To lose a chance she wad be laith—
Gin he speak fair, she'll be till death,
A lovin' wife to Collie.

She has, forbye, in her kist neuk,
Some gear tied up in little beuk;
In hairsts she made it wi' her heuk—
She'll spend it a' wi' Collie.

Fu' sune he's led her to the kirk—
Fu' blithly she did smile and smirk—
While Jenny still maun fecht an' work,
Because she's slichted Collie.

FIFTY YEARS AGO.

Change is the order o' the day,
Ilk year brings something new,
Some new machine to saw or shear,
Or some new-fangled plough.
The fashions now are greatly changed
Amang baith high and low;
Few things remain the same's they were
Some fifty years ago.

The lasses o' the present time
How gay themsel's they deck;
Ilk ane sports, sae jauntily,
Her bonnet on her neck.

Wi' satin gowns an' parasols
They mak' a gallant show ;
That wasna how their grannies drest
Back fifty years ago.

The maiden names their grannies got
Were Eppie, Kate, or Bell ;
They made the kebbuck an' the kirn—
Brought water from the well.
Our lasses are a' misses now,
An' that 'mang high an' low ;
Our gentry a' sic honours got
Some fifty years ago.

Some fifty years ago, ilk wife
Possessed her spinnin'-wheel ;
The gudeman had to thrash a' day,
At nicht the pirns to reel.
Railroads now join toun to toun,
Through hill an' dale they go ;
Our land wi' pride has made a stride
Sin' fifty years ago.

NEIL THOMSON,

BETTER known by his *nom-de-plume*, "The Hyde Park Foundry Man," was born in Glasgow in 1823. He comes of a military family—his father and his paternal grandfather before him having been soldiers during the Peninsular War. His mother's father also served his country in the battlefield, and when a child she was carried through Ireland on her mother's back whilst her father was assisting in extinguishing the famous rebellion of '98. His father died in early life, and he having been of improvident habits, the mother and a family of four were left in the deepest poverty. Neil was the oldest, and though only about ten years of age, he had to go to work in the shop of a tinsmith

for one shilling and sixpence a-week. He was employed in various mills until his nineteenth year, when he enlisted. Up to this time his education was very meagre. He had learned to read in an old woman's school when a mere child, and had acquired a little knowledge of arithmetic and writing in various night schools during the winter months. His mother frequently said when she had any difficulty in getting him out of bed to his work in the cold mornings—"Ah! lad, you'll jump to the sound of the bugle yet." Her words were afterwards verified, but to this day he does not regret being a soldier. The army proved to him an excellent school for a young city arab. It taught him to be punctual, sharp, and true to his word. Ragged and hungered, it fed, clothed, and made a man of him, until at length "the drunkard's raggit laddie" commanded men before princes! His length of service extended to upwards of ten years, during which time he spent six years in the Mediterranean stations of Malta and Gibraltar. He was a non-commissioned officer for eight years of the ten, and a full sergeant most of that time, and for a period of two years did duty as hospital sergeant.

Mr Thomson purchased his discharge in 1853, and was employed as a warder in Her Majesty's convict prison, Gibraltar, for two years, leaving which he went up to the Crimea in charge of Spanish horses and mules for the army before Sebastopol. Having returned home, he became for some years clerk in a large colliery near Glasgow, and for the last twenty-three years he has been timekeeper in Hyde Park Locomotive Works, Springburn, Glasgow. His military tastes being still strong, he joined the volunteer corps in connection with that establishment, served eleven years, and attained to the rank of quartermaster-sergeant.

Our poet informs us that his literary career is very simple. "After I got my first piece, 'The Bull

Fight,' printed in the now defunct *Morning Journal*, over twenty years ago, I went on contributing a sketch or a piece of poetry now and again to it and other newspapers—principally the *Ladies' Own Journal*, Edinburgh, and, later, the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* and *Evening Times*, and occasionally in the *Weekly Mail*. Mr Somers of the *Journal*, and Mr Freeland of the *Weekly Herald*, gave me warm encouragement; and on the whole I feel that the press has treated me better than I deserved." In 1866 Mr Thomson made a selection from his prose sketches, and these were published in book form under the title of "Scraps out of a Soldier's Haversack." The volume gives several graphically-written and thrilling narratives of the career of a soldier, with descriptions of convict life, and met with much popularity. Although his earlier years were spent in circumstances little fitted to awaken or foster a love of poetry, and although the prose of life, and that, too, in its hardest and severest forms, was his, he has written many finely-sustained and very melodious verses. He possesses a true ear for all the varied harmonies of music and of Nature. He can paint in words of real poetic beauty the pure quiet of the country, with its pleasant sights and sounds, and city life, with its scenes of busy turmoil, wealth, and misery, with a pathos and a life-likeness that every one who reads the productions of his charming pen must admire.

ROBIN.

The bonnie bird wi' briest o' red
  Cam' early in the autumn,
An' frae his heart he sang to me
  The sang that God had taught him.

His big black e'e gleamed bonnilie,
  His cheepin' made me cheerie;
I kent the sang wad aye be mine
  A' through the winter drearie.

I missed your sang, my bonnie bird,
When summer flowers were blawin';
Noo tell me why ye visit me
'Mang wintry winds an' snawin'?

His bleezin' briestie glowed wi' pride,
His ans'rin' notes rang cheerie—
"Faith sent me forth to prove your love
A' through the winter drearie."

SING.

Sing, child, with wond'ring eyes,
Undimmed with clouds of sorrow,
Sing, child, for your bright skies
May all be dimmed to-morrow.

Sing, lass, when flowers bloom,
For years will blast thy beauty,
Sing, lass, ere woman's doom
O'ershadows all thy duty.

Sing, lad, whilst roses blow,
And perfume ev'ry pleasure,
Sing, lad, ere thou may'st know,
The lack of love and treasure.

Sing, wife, with cares untold,
Songs make the burden lighter,
Sing, wife, though getting old,
'Twill make thy sunset brighter.

Sing, man, when death draws near,
Death comes but to deliver,
Sing, man, whilst thou art here,
And thou shalt sing forever.

Sing, all, bondman or free,
Whole-hearted and heart-riven;
Sing, all, God's melody,
And make this earth a heaven.

BONNY BURNIE.

O, I lo'e thee, bonny burnie,
Dirlin' doon wi' muckle din,
Whumlin', tumblin' on thy journey
Lichtly loupin' ilka linn;
Jaupin' ower wi' gladsome glee,
Searchin' for the silver sea.

Yes, I lo'e thee, bonny burnie,
Dancin' doon the verdant vale,
Joukin' joyous on thy journey,
Wooed by every wanton gale.
Glintin' through the gowan lea,
Searchin' for the silver sea.

Heaven bless thee, flower-fringed burnie,
Playin' a' the sunny hours,
Singin' sangies on the journey,
Daffin wi' the fragrant flowers.
Love blinks bonny in your e'e,
Searchin' for the silver sea.

Prattle on, love-laden burnie,
Restless as a waukrife wean,
Lendin' blessin's on thy journey,
Heaven returnin' them again.
Flowin' ever, flowin' free,
Frae an' to the silver sea.

THE MITHERLESS BABE.

O, what are ye "gooin'" at, bonny wee wean?
Do you think it's your mither that's kissin' ye?
Ah, no, my sweet birdie, for God has her ta'en,
But her angelic spirit is blessin' ye.

What are ye laughin' at, bonny wee thing?
When it's no your ain mither that's kissin' ye,
But I'll be your mammy, an' sweetly I'll sing
In place o' a mither that's blessin' ye.

What are ye "crawin'" at, wee innocent wean?
O, it mak's my heart sair when I'm kissin' ye,
But O, my sweet cherub, it gladdens again
When I think on the mither that's blessin' ye.

What brings thae smiles ower that bonny wee face?
When there's naebody nursin' or kissin' ye?
Ah, I ken it's your mither frae yon happy place
That's watchin' your cradle, an' blessin' ye.

O, bonny wee sleeper, thae wee feet maun roam,
An' the cauld wafts o' care may be kissin' ye,
But whate'er by thy fortune, whaure'er by thy hame,
O, remember, thy mither is blessin' ye.

THERE'S A BONNIE BOURTRIE BOWER.

There's a bonnie bourtrie bower
In oor back yaird,
Wi' a honeysuckle door,
In oor back yaird,
Whaur, enfaulded frae the sun,
We passed mony 'oors o' fun;
But thae lauchin' days are done
In oor back yaird.

There were flowers a' roun' the bower
In oor back yaird,
An' a gowan-spaingled floor
In oor back yaird,
Whaur oor weans wi' gladsome glee
Played at "tig" fu' merrilie,
Oh, 'twas love an' harmonie
In oor back yaird.

Noo, deid silence reigns supreme
In oor back yaird,
An' the past's just like a dream
In oor back yaird,
For the bairns ha'e grown an' gane
To ha'e bow'ries o' their ain,
But their shadows aye remain
In oor back yaird.

A LIFE SONG.

O sweet fa's the gloamin' o' day to the weary,
An' sweet is the hour when the shadows grow lang,
'Tis then the poor toiler, the hard workin' moiler
Returns to his biggin' to hear his wife's sang.
A' day in the quarry, the mine, or the smiddy,
He wields the big hammer for unco sma' gain,
But the hour o' the gloamin', tho' langsome o' comin',
Brings balm on its bosom to soothe a' his pain.

O sweet to the wee things is the hour o' the ev'nin',
When daddy comes hame frae his lang weary moil,
O, their frolics an' daffin, their crawin' an' laughin'
Rewards the guidman for a' his sair toil.
O, there's joy in the biggin' wi' its humble thack riggin'
That the ha's o' the noble an' great seldom ken;
What tho' they dine lichtly, true love burns brichtly,
An' the puir honest bodies are easy to fen.

An' sweet is the gloamin' o' life to the weary,
Oh, welcome's that hour to the slave an' oppresst,

When the heel o' the miser, an' whip of oppressor
Can nae mair despoil their puir victims o' rest.
Oh, the toilin' an' moilin', the grindin' an' spoilin',
Are changed for a home in the realms of peace,
Oh, the hour o' life's gloamin', tho' langsome o' comin'
Bids sorrows, an' trials, an' troubles to cease.

THE WILD FLOWER.

I saw a little meadow flower
All sparkling with the dew,
It had a cap of crimson red,
And coat of brilliant blue;
Its modest look was heavenward,
Its incense filled the air,
And O, the love of that sweet flower
Has eased my heart of care.
Ah, yes, that lovely fragrant flower,
Though rooted to one spot,
Has shown to me that I should be
Contented with my lot.
Tempests or storms, or cloudy days,
Its constancy may try,
It, matters not, that faithful flower
Looks always to the sky.

W. ROXBURGH

IS a native of Kilmarnock. At the age of eighteen he went as assistant teacher to Allan's School, Stirling, and led the Allan School boys in the procession at the laying of the foundation stone of the Wallace Monument on Abbey Craig. He studied at the Established Church Training College, Glasgow, for two years, and was then appointed assistant in St James's Parish, or Sessional School, Great Hamilton Street, Glasgow. Mr Roxburgh subsequently became teacher in Kerr Street School, Kirkintilloch, and thereafter taught successively schools in Kirkcudbrightshire and Kirkmaiden. He is presently teacher of the

Townend School, Kirkcudbright. He is very fond of translating from the Latin and French into English verse, and has made several important and very successful translations. He occasionally contributes both in prose and verse to several newspapers and literary journals, and wrote, in particular, in the *People's Friend*, an able "analysis" on the subject of the late Rev. George Gilfillan's poem, "Night." There is an airy grace, happy conception, and quiet humour about his poetry that commends it to the hearts of the thoughtful, and to lovers of healthy and playful fancy. He also gives careful attention to the niceties of expression. His touching tenderness and depth of feeling are evident in "The Dying Child," in which we read of the sorrow and anxiety of a mother about to be bereaved of her first-born, early called to a home where even her love is surpassed.

THE DYING CHILD.

Dimly burns the taper at the lonely midnight hour
In yon cottage by the river, 'neath the shade of leafy bower,
What mean those silent shadows flitting 'cross the window screen,
Or the wail of mournful voices that is coming from within?

'Tis the sound of lamentation for the Miller's angel boy,
Who like a flower is drooping in the spring of life and joy,
His spirit now is struggling with his frame of earthly clay,
And would mount on eagle pinions to the realms of endless day.

His mother's gentle accents are now falling on his ear,
As she stoops to kiss his temples, and to bathe them with a tear,
And in words, with wailings broken, coming from her bursting
heart,
She asks for some love token ere yet on earth they part.

He turns his glazing eyeball, that was sinking fast in death,
To his mother's anxious countenance, and "Take," he faintly
saith,
"My Bible from the cupboard, and turn its pages o'er
To where the leaf is folded, read this, and ask no more.

I have often read it, mother, when the moon was in the sky,
I have read it when the dewdrops on heather bells did lie,

And still I drew fresh sweetness when I scanned its beauties o'er,
As the bee doth suck the honey from each opening dewy flower.

And now I feel a pleasure which this world can never give,
I wish to be with Jesus, and with Him for ever live,
Sweet angels hover round me, they are whispering near me now,
For I feel their wings are waving o'er my fevered burning brow."

His friends stood round him weeping, but he bade them stay
their tears,
For Christ his soul was keeping, and for death he had no fears,
He hailed the land of glory, and the Saviour's chariot nigh,
And left this world behind him for a better in the sky.

SONG OF THE STRAP.

Teach, teach, teach,
As far as the eye can reach,
They sit on the multitudinous forms,
Or cluster about him like bees in swarms,
Or sprawl on the floor like wriggling worms,
That one may pick up on the beach.

Shout, shout, shout,
'Mid the reel and rally and rout;
Oh, blest is the man that can scarely hear,
Or who has got cotton stuffed into his ear,
Or who of a headache has never a fear,
Nor puts himself much about.

Slap, slap, slap,
Like a mouse that's caught in a trap,
The finger of one in the mouth of another,
Who deals with it not as a friend or a brother,
But makes the poor victim cry out for his mother,
And brings himself in for the strap.

Stop, stop, stop,
Here's a fellow that will not drop
His voice at the end of a sentence at all,
Nor stand unless with his back to the wall,
And every minute his book lets fall,
For somebody else to pick up.

Spell, spell, spell,
Till his head just rings like a bell,
With now and again a bit of a pause,
In which may be heard the slap of the tawse
On those who are breaking Orthography's laws,
The chorus to which is a yell.

Write, write, write,
On a copy more dirty than white,
Here's one that has just lost his pen in the ink,
Another has finished his page in a blink,
While his neighbour complains, he can't see a wink,
And kicks him out of his light.

Late, late, late,
Oh pity the dominie's fate,
Who loses, each day, half-an-hour as a rule
With those who were laggards in coming to school,
Yet say with assurance so shockingly cool,
"They ran at a terrible rate."

Play, play, play—
Ay, look how they scamper away,
Their caps on their heads, and their books on their backs,
The playground for ever of liberty smacks,
And *their ardent spirits* what coward could tax—
Hurray, then, hurray, hurray.

PERSEVERANCE.

Forward, forward still be moving,
Nothing's gained by standing still;
Everything, dull sloth reproving,
Bids us strive with heart and will.

Onward in the path of duty,
Toiling upward on our way,
For one glance of heaven's beauty
All our labour will repay.

Mark the sun from east ascending,
Stays he? stops he? in his race
Never—till in west descending,
Ocean cools his heated face.

See the trees with blossom flourish
When in spring the sun is high,
Then the fostering zephyrs nourish
Fruits with autumn's golden dye.

Next behold the restless ocean,
All is life beneath its waves,
Where the fish with joyous motion
Sport throughout its crystal caves.

Worlds, revolving on their axes,
Indicate, as swift they fly,

When their whirling speed relaxes,
Then their harmony must die.

Let us, then, 'mid pain and sorrow,
Ever upward seek to rise,
Till a bright eternal morrow
Dawn upon us in the skies.

THE HOUR OF REST.

The sun has sunk in the golden west,
From his toil and travel free,
As sinks the warrior to his rest
On the field of victory.

The labourers, hard in the harvest pressed,
Abandon the golden sheaves,
When the day note warns, and their ears are blessed
By its sound through the woodland leaves.

The hammer drops from the brawny hand
That guided its ringing blow,
The apron covers the smithy stand,
And the fire is burning low.

The woodman's axe has ceased to fall
On the root of the old oak tree,
The cattle come at the shepherd's call,
And the lambkins leap in glee.

A stillness steals along the shore,
A silence o'er the main,
All Nature rests from labour sore,
To fit her for toil again.

LOVE.

Love is a virtue, heavenly, sacred, sweet,
A bond between this world and that above,
A centre where all other virtues meet,
The sun of every system—God is Love.

But love doth beat in human breast as well,
And echo from each shady summer bower,
The birds repeat it, and the streamlets tell
The story to the crimson blushing flower.

A mother's love is stronger far than death,
The joys of home our infant bosoms fill,

Our native land would buy our latest breath
To keep her freedom and her memories still.

The love which angels feel we cannot know,
But surely it must be of kindred birth
With that which we experience here below,
And which doth make a little heaven of earth.

DAVID LOUDEN,

ANOTHER poetic schoolmaster, was born at St Andrews in 1838. He is one of a large family of fifteen, and his father and mother, who have been married for sixty-four years, are still hale and hearty, at the respective ages of ninety and eighty-four. Mr Louden was educated at Madras College, and served for five years as pupil teacher in that institution. After occupying several situations as private tutor and important assistantships, including Forres Academy, and acting very efficiently as rector of Stiell's Hospital, Tranent, he was appointed teacher of Morham School, near Haddington—his abilities as a scholar and as a teacher, according to the testimony of qualified and influential authorities, being of a high order.

Previous to the dreadful storm of 1881 he had not written a single line to a newspaper. He was then a prisoner for three months, and during that year he regularly sent sketches and papers of a racy, thoughtful, and instructive nature to the *Fifeshire Journal*, and at times to the *Fifeshire Herald*. These bore the *nom-de-plume* of "*Dum spiro spero*." Several of the productions of his pen have been reprinted in pamphlet form, including a biographical sketch of the late Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair, at one time Provost of St Andrews. Mr Louden also appears frequently in the poet's corner

of the *Haddington Advertiser* and other Scottish newspapers. His poetry is generally felicitous and racy, with a dash of pleasing humour and quiet sarcasm. Several of his character sketches possess graphic descriptions, and evince an intelligent knowledge of the use of "auld warl'" Doric.

OOR MINISTER'S MAN.

TUNE—"Kate Dalrymple."

It's a year noo or twa sin' oor bellman slipped awa',
An' was laid i' the mools, in oor kirkyaird sae bonnie;
But mony a ane, I trow, is livin' even now
Wha minds the queer sayin's an' daein's o' Johnie.
He had but a'e e'e, oor minister's man, he
Had the gift o' the gab, oor minister's man, he
"Kent the crack o' the whup," tae, o' ilk drouthie cronie,
An' keepit a' oor roads trig, oor auld bellman Johnie.

Mony a head did he hap, in its mither earth's lap,
When he lived here abune, an' mony a tear he
Saw m'urners let fa' for their dear anes awa',
O never tae come back frae their lang hame sae dreary.
He had but a'e e'e, &c.

Sixteen white shillin's was a gude wage to mak
Ilka week, weet an' dry, frae Monday to Monday,
Forbye gettin' in wi' the big folk to crack,
An' retailin' a' the uncos to the minister on Sunday.
He had but a'e e'e, &c.

He could delve his maister's yaird, an' whiles had the luck
To get a saxpence in a twinklin' for haudin' a pony;
Switch hedges, scour ditches, cut drains, or fill muck,
A Jack-o'-a' trades kind o' man was oor Johnie.
He had but a'e e'e, &c.

Ony clash he could learn 'boot his neebors' affairs
That was likely to bring on them some sad mischanter,
He would fidge himsel' fu' fain, an' pit on unco airs,
An' rin to "let the cat oot o' the pock" at a canter.
He had but a'e e'e, &c.

A hearty guffaw an' a dram at its back
Was aye ready payment by his reverence there for;
Then the "big-bellied bottle" did keep up the crack,
Till his holiness drew oot o'm the why an' the wherefore.
He had but a'e e'e, &c,

A bit eke here an' there to mak' it look braw
Was sma' trouble to the glib tongue o' oor tattlin' bellman,
An' mony a disturbance was raised by the twa,
Wha should hae been patterns o' truthfulness itsel', man.
He had only a'e e'e, oor minister's man, he
Had the gift o' the gab, oor minister's man; he
"Kent the crack o' the whup" tae, o' ilk drouthy cronie,
An' keepit a' oor roads trig, oor tale-pyet Johnie.

JAMIE.

Our little Jim on father's knee
Sits laughingly, how laughingly,
And chatters in his childish glee,
So happily, how happily.

The shaggy beard he plucks full oft
So boisterously, how boisterously,
Or plaits it with his handies soft,
So cannily, how cannily.

"Pa! where's 'oor mouf," he'll loudly cry,
So heartily, how heartily;
"Pa got no mouf" then will he sigh,
"No mouf," and shake head thoughtfully.

Anon he lifts the lid aloft,
So pawkily, how pawkily,
And kisses father's lips so soft,
Affectionately, affectionately.

Then on one knee he gets astride,
So jauntily, how jauntily,
His wee legs o'er his horse to ride,
So trustfully, how trustfully.

The canter makes his chubby cheeks,
So rosy like, how rosy like,
And then with beaming eyes he keeks
In mother's face, in mother's face.

The canter o'er, undressing comes,
So mournfully, how mournfully,
And then father quietly hums,
So plaintively, how plaintively.

And Jamie soon in Morpheus' arms
Lies dreamily, how dreamily;
Safe now till morn from wild alarms,
Lying cosily, how cosily.

ALFRED JOHN WEYMAN,

ALTHOUGH born in London in 1865, has, with the exception of about a year spent in travelling through Germany, France, Holland, &c., resided in Glasgow since he was eighteen months old. Mr Weyman was educated at the Church of Scotland Training College, Glasgow. His first literary efforts were in the form of a series of papers on Natural History, written when he was about twelve years of age. These caught the eye of Mr G. A. Henty, the famous war correspondent of the London *Standard*, who expressed himself highly pleased with them. Mr Weyman is a member of several literary and scientific societies, and intends to follow the profession of a journalist. In addition to occasional poems and songs, he has written many thoughtful and graphic essays, tales, and sketches for magazines, periodicals, and newspapers. These give promise of a successful career in the field of letters.

BONNIE FADED FLOWER.

Ah! once thou felt'st the balmy air
Of summer's healthful shining hours;
Yea, once thou wert so sweet and fair,
Nestling 'mid yon cosy bowers,
Bonnie faded flower.

But life with thee her joys soon spent,
Too pure wert thou to live 'mid them;
On idle loving purpose bent,
We plucked thee from thy fragile stem,
Bonnie faded flower.

Where oft we met, to grove so dear,
Thy form and fragrance lent their charms;
We breathed our secrets in thine ear,
And twined us in each other's arms—
Bonnie faded flower.

Full well thy beauty gaily shone
Upon my darling Nellie's breast,
But now thy charms are past and gone,
As sinks the summer sun to rest—
Bonnie faded flower.

THE DAISY.

What! dost thou deem the tiny little flower,
Glistening with drops of an April shower,
And moulded by the hand of Him who sees
All things that every mind and eye can please,
Worthless? Say not so!

For things most common have touches of beauty,
And flowers can teach us the path of duty;
Read them aright as they grow at our feet,
And call not teachers of wisdom so meet
Worthless! Say not so!

Knowest thou the daisy, in crimson and white,
Opes its closed lids to the dawn's soft light?
When crushed by the foot of the bard at the plough
It spoke to his heart, it speaks to thee now—
Worthless? Say not so!

To poet and psalmist and teacher divine
The daisies, *the day's eyes*, are day stars that shine
Low at our feet, like the lamps of the sky,
To brighten our path as homeward we hie—
Worthless? Say not so!

A. DEWAR WILLOCK,

THE genial and talented author of the following verses, is in the true sense of the word a "one poem poet." Not a few of our poets are known as the writers of a song or hymn that has "lived," while they have composed numerous pieces that are of second-rate merit. Mr Willock's solitary "bairn,"

"She Noddit to Me," has enjoyed wide popularity. It came under the notice of Her Majesty, and she indicated her approval of the verses by instituting inquiries as to the name of the author. In forwarding to the Queen the dedication copy of the song, which was specially prepared by Mr Macbeth, Aberdeen, he gave expression to the homely wish that she might "be long spared to 'nod' to her loving subjects." Mr Willock tells us that he is "the most prosaic individual that ever left his hair unkempt." We know him to be a writer of much power and originality. His prose is often poetical, and everything he writes is racy and caustic, while a rich flow of pleasing humour is clearly perceptible. He is always practical, manly, cheerful, and full of a sympathetic and pawky fun that illustrates his shrewd common sense. In his case we depart from our usual custom of telling the life-story of "our poet," and allow him to introduce himself in his characteristic style.

"A. Dewar Willock scarcely deserves a place in the list of Scottish poets, never having been guilty of the poetic habit save once, and it is believed that he has been bound over to keep the peace never to do it again, no matter what provocation he receives. A. Dewar Willock was born in Dundee on the 8th November, 1846, of poor because honest parents. He attended various schools somewhat irregularly, and at the close of his scholastic career had one rule of grammar firmly implanted in his mind—'that a verb must agree with its nominative, as John, London, Book.' The subject of this sketch began to earn his bread in the *Dundee Advertiser* Office, and in due time reaped butter to that bread as a full-fledged compositor. When the *Evening Telegraph* began Mr Willock scribbled a series of nonsense papers, entitled 'Job's Reflections on Current Topics,' and ultimately, nonsense being precious, Mr Leng summoned him to assume the sub-editorship of the *People's Journal* under

Mr W. D. Latto. While in this position he contributed a series of Scottish sketches, entitled 'Rosetty Ends,' and, like most newspaper men, has made the public the victims of a vast amount of prose of a more or less depressing kind. Having been offered an appointment on the *Scottish People* staff, Mr Willock went to Aberdeen, and the bracing atmosphere of that northern city seems to have turned on the poetic tap, and 'She Noddit to Me' was the result. This is understood to have been the only indiscretion he has been guilty of, and he pleads as an extenuating circumstance that 'it is a very little one.'"

SHE NODDIT TO ME.

I'm but an auld body
  Living up in Deeside
In a twa-roomed bit hoosie
  Wi' a toofa' beside;
Wi' my coo an' my grumphy
  I'm as happy's a bee,
But I'm far prooder noo
  Since she noddit to me!

I'm nae sae far past wi't—
  I'm gey trig an' hale,
Can plant twa-three tawties,
  An' look aifter my kale;
An' when oor Queen passes
  I rin oot to see
Gin by luck she micht notice
  An' nod oot to me!

But I've aye been unlucky,
  An' the blinds were aye doon,
Till last week the time
  O' her veesit cam' roon';
I waved my bit apron
  As brisk's I could dee,
An' the Queen lauched fu' kindly,
  An' noddit to me!

My son sleeps in Egypt—
It's nae ease to freit—
An' yet when I think o't
I'm sair like to greet;
She may feel for my sorrow—
She's a mither, ye see—
An' may be she kent o't
When she noddit to me!

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